IF YOU ARE OLD READ THE LEDGER STORIES AND GROW YOUNG.
IF YOU ARE YOUNG READ THE LEDGER STORIES AND GROW WISE.

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THE BLACK INN;

Or, THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISHMAEL

By T. C. HARBAUGH, Author of "The Green Carnation," "Alice of Maryland," etc.

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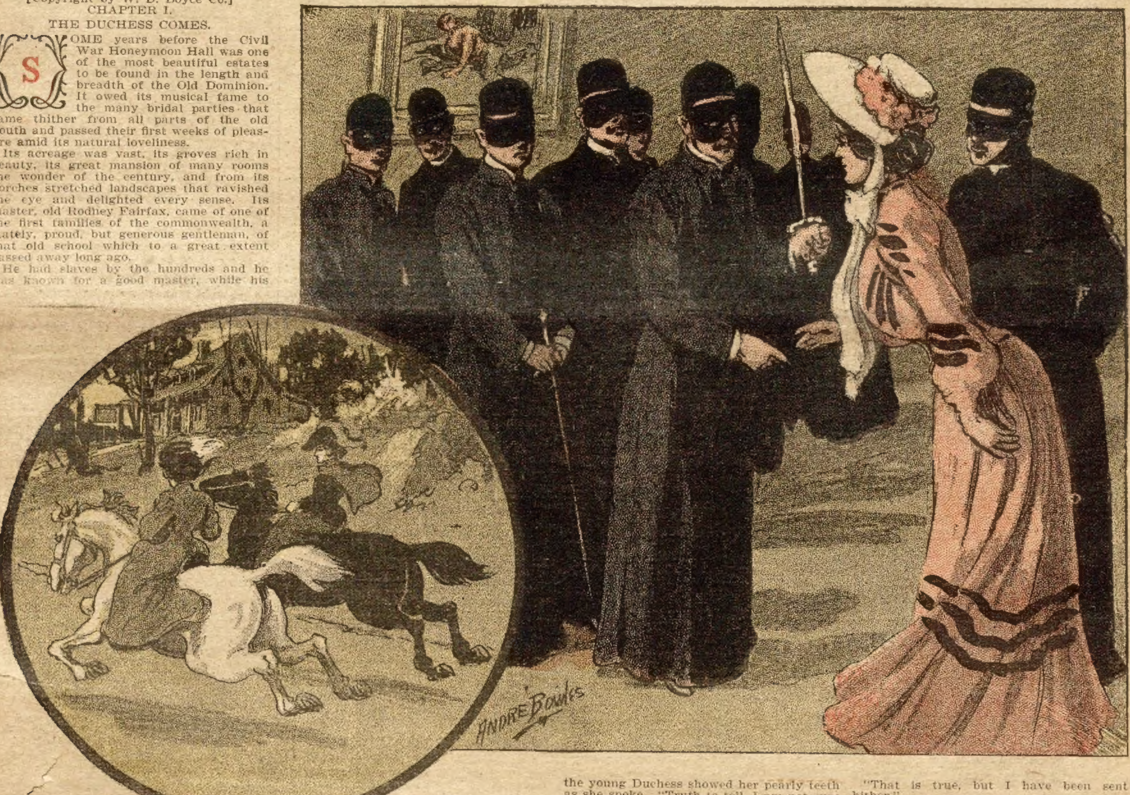
CHAPTER I.

THE DUCHESS COMES.

SOME years before the Civil War Honeymoon Hall was one of the most beautiful estates to be found in the length and breadth of the Old Dominion. It owed its musical fame to the many bridal parties that came thither from all parts of the old South and passed their first weeks of pleasure amid its natural loveliness.

Its acreage was vast, its groves rich in beauty, its great mansion of many rooms the wonder of the century, and from its porches stretched landscapes that ravished the eye and delighted every sense. Its master, old Rodney Fairfax, came of one of the first families of the commonwealth, a stately, proud, but generous gentleman, of that old school which to a great extent passed away long ago.

He had slaves by the hundreds and he was known for a good master, while his wife, of excellent stock like himself, was a woman to be loved and worshipped.



The immediate family of Honeymoon Hall consisted of Fairfax, his wife, a son, Randolph, and a niece whom they had raised from childhood. It was the fame of the good cheer to be found ever at the Hall that gained for it a name as familiar throughout the South as was that of the capital of the nation.

Distant, some ten miles from the Potomac, the old mansion stood on a rise from which a magnificent view of that lordly river could be obtained. Boats plied up and down the stream, and it was seldom that none stopped at the landing with freight or passengers for the Hall.

Toward the close of what had been an ideal summer day the Fairfax coach, driven by Jim, the coachman, rattled over the road that led from the river to Honeymoon Hall. He had a single passenger, but strapped on the back of the vehicle was a lot of portmanteaus which indicated that the person inside was one of distinction.

Jim's passenger was a young woman richly dressed, and as she lolled back in the depths of the family carriage she displayed her wrists, which were encircled by bracelets set with diamonds. She was a beautiful woman, with a fair complexion and large dark eyes that suggested love, and Jim vowed to himself when he first set eyes on her, that she was as pretty as Mis' Lelia, the young mistress of the Hall. She first addressed the darky in a tongue which he did not understand, and, seeing her mistake, she descended to plain English, which she spoke with an accent that rendered her voice all the more entrancing.

The two duns seemed to fly over the ground, for Jim was proud of his passenger, and at last he pulled up in front of the mansion. He alighted, hat in hand, and opened the door of the carriage.

"De Hall, Missa'!" he announced, and the young lady, gathering up her skirts, alighted and looked around.

Just then the wide front door of the mansion opened and Lelia Fairfax appeared on the porch.

The fair Virginian seemed nonplussed for a moment, then she came forward with a welcome in her eyes.

"I am Lola Du Berri," said the visitor. "In other words, I am the Duchess Du Berri in my own country. Is your father at home, for I take it that you are a Fairfax?"

"Father is at home," was the reply. "He never told me that he expected you——'

"Perhaps he is not looking for me," and the young Duchess showed her pearly teeth as she spoke. "Truth to tell, I am not sure of a welcome here, though the surroundings are superb, grand!"

Lelia led her visitor toward the house and up on the veranda. The two young folks were of the same build, but Lelia had hair of the richest chestnut hue, while that of her companion was as dark as the raven's wing.

In a few moments the Duchess Du Berri stood within the walls of a large parlor, furnished in keeping with the times, and Lelia, saying that she would summon her foster-father, had left her alone.

The young woman thus left alone sank into one of the large arm-chairs and studied her surroundings. The soft light that filtered through the heavy lace curtains lent a dreaminess to the place that suggested repose, and she seemed to succumb to this, for she leaned back and closed her eyes.

Presently the door opened without disturbing her, and Rodney Fairfax stood before her. The old man looked at the occupant of the chair and started. He seemed on the point of leaving the parlor, when Lola Du Berri opened her eyes and welcomed him with a smile.

"Pardon, monsieur," said she, "I did not hear you enter. I was entirely taken away in this paradise."

Fairfax took a step toward her and placed one finger upon his lip.

"Remember, I did not send for you," said he.

"That is true, but I have been sent hither."

At the same time she drew from her bosom a letter which she extended toward the master of the manor.

He seemed on the point of refusing it, but upon second thought, as it were, he took it gingerly, still looking into the ravishing eyes of the woman who had come.

She followed him with her gaze while he withdrew to a window and broke the waxen seal of the missive. A tremor shook his frame and he bent still nearer the light as if to make sure that he were not dreaming. For some moments he remained in deep perusal of the letter.

"So," said he at last, as he turned again upon his visitor, "so you have been sent to me?"

"The letter should tell you why, monsieur."

"It does. Then, he is dead?"

"Yes, and I am the last of my line."

"If he is dead, you certainly are. You resemble your uncle a good deal."

"I am disposed to take that for a compliment, monsieur."

"Just as you please," and Fairfax smiled. "I can't see just why he could not have sent you elsewhere."

"Perhaps he knew no other place for me."

Fairfax did not reply to these words, but, advancing closer to Lola Du Berri with the letter crushed in his hand, he said in an undertone:

"You have shortened my days, girl."

The woman's cheeks suddenly went a little pale.

"I cannot see why. I am alone in the world and I am not a beggar," and as if to prove this she showed her bracelets, which caught the eye of Fairfax.

"You have doubtless traveled far without proper rest," he went on. "I will give orders for your entertainment. You have already met Lelia, and it is a meeting which the girl will remember to her dying day," and, whirling on his heel, the master of the manor turned and left the room.

He gave orders that the visitor should be taken to the best chamber in the mansion, and then passed on to his own little room in the east wing of the house.

There he flung himself into a chair and reread the letter. It ran as follows:

"My dear Fairfax—I send with this letter my niece, the Duchess Lola Du Berri, who is now the last of her line. In less than an hour I shall have passed the portals of mortality and shall try, what is called by some, the realities of the unseen world. You remember the oath of shipboard years ago, that, should I die without issue, you will take upon yourself the task of taking care of the last of the Du Berris, even at the risk of life itself. This young girl is not poor. Indeed, she comes to you with wealth as well as beauty. Her jewels are enough to buy the richest plantation in America, but she is under a curse. Guard her well, for every day her life is in danger and I shall hold you responsible for any evil that befalls her. Her blood is as good as yours or mine. If you have children, she is as good as they, even if her mother was not a seraph. If evil befalls the Duchess Du Berri after you shall have read this letter the vengeance that shall fall upon you and yours shall be terrible. Better had you never been born. If you reject her, after the oath you have taken, the dead will see to it that you shall not escape punishment. She may bring a curse to your house, but you dare not turn her off. I shall be dead when you read this, but fate still lives—fate and vengeance! Watch over the Duchess Lola, stand ever between her and disaster, for by the living God, you must answer for your stewardship! Therefore, turn her not off, treat her as you would treat your own, for, though she is alone in the world, she is not helpless. Remember the terrible oath in the Baltic when we had but a rotten plank between us and doom. GASTON DU BERRI."

The letter fell from Fairfax's hands and trembled on the carpet.

He arose and for ten minutes paced the room, pale of face and with the rapid strides of a tiger.

"Why did she come?" he asked himself. "Why didn't the sea swallow her and keep her forever in its possession? In the name of the God I serve, why didn't Jim stop in the Big Wood and strangle her with his yellow hands! Aye, why? But she is here. The shadow of the curse has already fallen upon Honeymoon Hall, and——"

The door opened and Lelia stood before him.

"Who is the Duchess Du Berri?" cried the young girl, as she ran forward, to pause within a few feet of Fairfax, as she caught the look in his eyes.

"Let the future answer you, child," was the reply. "I am powerless just now to explain matters. Treat her as becomes her rank——"

"Then she is a real duchess?"

"A duchess or a viper—time will tell!" and with this Fairfax kissed the golden-haired girl and strode from the room, leaving the echo of his last words behind.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUCHESS DISAPPEARS.

Before a week had passed the fair young duchess was fairly installed in Honeymoon Hall.

There had grown up between her and Lelia a friendship which seemed to have ripened into love and they were always together. Riding or walking, they were inseparables, and within the mansion they were rarely apart.

The girl from France came and went without questioning. She now and then seemed morose, but the voice of Lelia cleared the atmosphere, as it were, and her gaiety soon returned. Rodney Fairfax seemed to have recovered his spirits, for he took an interest in his guest and gave orders that she should be treated as one of the family.

Lelia did not seek to penetrate the mystery which overhung Lola's past; she had evidently made up her mind to accept the facts as she now and then heard them, little reminiscenses of a childhood on the banks of the Loire with a brief residence in Paris.

"What is over the hills yonder?" asked Lola one rare afternoon, when she and Lelia were returning from a gallop across country. "I don't believe you have showed me that part of the world."

"There is nothing there but the Black Inn," was the reply, as Lelia half averted her face.

"The Black Inn?" exclaimed the other. "I believe you have never mentioned it before?"

"It is one of those old inns that recall the past," said Fairfax's niece. "We have many in this country——"

"As we have old castles in France. Let us ride over there and enjoy an hour with mine host of the Black Inn."

"But there is no host. The old place is deserted."

"So much the more romantic. I like old deserted places and they always appeal to me."

"If you wish, my dear, but I must first tell you that the Black Inn is under a curse."

"How strange; and haunted besides?"

"At times, they say."

"Then I must see it."

The two girls turned their horses' heads in another direction and spurred away. The face of Lelia Fairfax had grown pale, but Lola did not notice this, and her own cheeks had reddened in the soft breeze that swept through the pinelands.

As they came out upon the crest of a hill Lelia pointed downward and said:

"It stands among those trees yonder. There is the famous Black Inn."

"Truly a romantic spot! You shall tell me what you know of its history while we inspect it."

Five minutes later they drew rein in front of a large, old-fashioned inn, the relic of a past century. The long porch seemed on the eve of giving way, and some of the branches of the hoary trees that surrounded it kissed the leaking roof. Over all there hung a shadow of a fear, but this did not daunt the Duchess Lola.

"Shall we not dismount and go in?" she said, with a glance at her companion.

"Since your curiosity seems incurable, yes," was the answer, and they tied their steeds to saplings before the place and crossed the dilapidated porch.

"The door is not locked, I see," cried Lola, as she swung open the old portal. "This is our welcome to the Black Inn. How really romantic!" and she stamped one of her little feet on the floor and laughed at the weird echo.

"Now, before we investigate, tell me the story of the old house," she went on. "There must be some mystery connected with it, and that is what I want to hear."

"Little do I know, and that little is uncanny," said Lelia. "It is said that many a crime has been committed beneath the roof of the Black Inn, that travelers who put up here vanished in the twinkling of an eye and were never heard from afterward. It is also said that the last landlord was a Bluebeard, and that he had many a wife who went off as mysteriously as did his guests."

"And you have never tried to solve the mysteries?"

"We never have. The story goes, that there is a curse on the inn to the effect that any one who attempts to solve its crimes will never live to sum up his work."

"It is weird indeed," said Lola. "This must have been the reception room," and she looked around upon the bare walls and noticed the thousands of cobwebs that hung from the ceiling. "Now, if mine host could come back from the Unseen we would doubtless have a narrative that would pay us for our visit."

"Doubtless," said Lelia through white lips.

"And does no one ever spend a night here to commune with the ghosts of the departed?"

"A night in this place?" cried Lelia, with a shudder. "Not for the world would I think of such a thing. It is said that the Brotherhood of Ishmael sometimes have high revel here."

"Pray what is the Brotherhood of Ishmael?" exclaimed Lola. "What a strange name!"

"You know the story of Ishmael?"

"Yes, he was the child of Hagar by Abraham; the pair were driven into the wilderness by the jealousy of Sarah, and the boy became the father of a race, but, as the Good Book says, his hand was against every man and every man's hand against him."

"That is the story of the first Ishmael," Lelia replied. "The Brotherhood seem to stand in the same relation to the present race of man in this locality. What it really is, no one knows, but that it is an organization of evil is pretty well established. People have received strange notices at night and they have vanished. Who leads the wild Brotherhood no one knows. And we dare not be too pointed in our inquiries. I am glad I know nothing of the Brotherhood of Ishmael, and am content to say that my knowledge of it and its terrible doings is nil."

"What a strange story you have told me!" laughed the Duchess Lola. "I have never heard of the Brotherhood of Ishmael, but this old inn seems to be the very place for their midnight carousals."

Lelia was eager to go.

"I must see the guest chamber of the Black Inn!" cried Lola, running to a door that seemed to lead to the second story of the place. "I have had my appetite whetted for more. Come, Lelia, shall we not go up and inspect the other rooms of this den of mystery?"

"I'd rather not, dear——"

"Your heart does not fail you, I hope, Lelia?" exclaimed the Duchess.

"It is not that, but I once promised papa that I would never ask to know the mysteries of this place."

"Then, if you will wait for me I will take a peep into the secrets overhead," and with this Lola flung open the stair door and bounded up the carpetless steps.

Lelia stood in the main room below with blanched cheeks.

She heard the last sounds of her companion's footsteps on the stair, and there crept into her soul a fear that seemed to drive every drop of her blood out of its proper channels.

The sun was sinking in the west, a great golden ball, and soon the soft haze of the summed day would robe the scene. Already long and, to her, ghostly shadows were stretching over the floor where she stood, and a huge spider, crossing his airy bridge of film, paused to look at her with his greenish eyes.

Then a large rat, gray with age, whisked out of a hole near the floor and looked viciously at her till she drew back and sought the veranda, where she waited with fear and trembling for the Duchess Lola. A night-hawk flew by with his nocturnal cry and a bat flapped his somber wings in her face.

Lelia waited till the shadows were very long and the whole scene was growing dark.

A weird breeze had taken possession of the lone pines, and the old inn looked more than ghostly in the vanishing light.

What had become of the Duchess Lola?

Lelia stood for some time longer, till her heart became filled with fears unutterable, and at last she ventured to look beyond the swinging door.

Nothing but gloom was there. She fancied she could see the spiders holding high carnival in the darkness, and the rats trooping over the floor in legions.

Summoning all the courage she could call to her rescue, she entered the inn and found the stair door.

"Lola, dear?" she called. "What on earth is keeping you? It is dark outside and a storm is rising over the mountain."

The echo of her words seemed to come back to her with the laugh of a fiend.

"In God's name, Lola, come down!" she went on. "This is a place of murder and death. It is the rendezvous of the Brotherhood of Ishmael; it is the house of doom!"

The old inn was as silent as the grave. No footsteps sounded responsively at Lelia's call, and with a startling gasp she ran back and out again upon the porch.

"My God, she has fallen into the hands of the demons!" she exclaimed. "The Duchess Lola is lost—lost forever!" and with this she bounded to her horse and, untying him, sprang upon his back and raced through the ghostly wood as if a legion of fiends were shrieking in her wake.

And behind her against the lowering clouds loomed the dread Black Inn with another victim in its terrible grasp.

CHAPTER III.

LELIA PLEADS FOR HER FRIEND.

The summer day had waned when Lelia Fairfax reined in her palfrey before Honeymoon Hall. During the wild ride homeward she had thought of but one thing—Lola in the Black Inn.

Springing across the porch she burst into the house and threw herself into an armchair that showed up indistinctly in the main parlor. She wanted to recover her breath before she related her terrible story.

Presently the door opened and Fairfax stood before her.

Made aware of his presence by his step, Lelia looked up and their eyes met.

There was an accusing look on the planter's face, and he advanced, looking down at the girl in the chair, but speaking not a single word.

"I came back alone," said the girl. "Merciful heavens! Lola is gone!"

"The Duchess gone—at last!" was the reply. "Have we got rid of the Duchess Du Berri so suddenly?"

"She is in the house of doom, that's where I left her," and the stern gaze that lit up the old man's eyes almost drove the girl from the chair.

"What is all this nonsense?" said the Virginian. "Tell me, for the words you have spoken I cannot understand."

He sat down beside her and tenderly took her hand in his. Often had he done this before, but never with such a look on his face.

"I—I disobeyed you, papa," continued Lelia, "but Lola was so insistent that I could not have the heart to say nay."

"Well?"

"She wanted to go to the Black Inn——"

"And you went?"

"Yes. We went to the forbidden house and entered. Lola was not satisfied with a survey of the lower rooms, but she must go upstairs, and there she is yet, unless——"

"Why didn't you tell her the stories connected with the old shambles?"

"I did, but that only served to stimulate her curiosity. She was determined to see for herself. Oh, papa, what is in the Black Inn?"

The color that until now had heightened the face of Fairfax fled like flax before a storm. It became white, and the girl fell back, for never before had she seen such an expression there.

"It was of her own seeking, then?" he said at last, and when he spoke his voice was strangely altered. "It was her infernal curiosity."

"You know that Lola is impulsive. At least I have found that out during the short time she has been at Honeymoon Hall. Indeed, she could not curb her curiosity, not even when I told her that it is said that the inn is the rendezvous of the Brotherhood of Ishmael."

"And, pray, what do you, a young girl, know about the Brotherhood of Ishmael?"

"Only what I have heard," and Lelia became frightened. "I will call it my fault that Lola is lost, for when she asked me what lay beyond the hills I told her the Black Inn. It is all my fault. But you will look for her, papa?"

"Not tonight," was the reply, at which the girl started.

"But Lola cannot remain there all the time. What if she has really fallen into the hands of the Brotherhood?"

"That is her lookout, not mine."

Fairfax crossed the room with nervous strides, and with his hand on the door knob looked back at the little girl in the chair.

"I can get Caesar and we will go and look for Lola ourselves," she exclaimed, as a sudden wave of courage swept over her form. "Caesar is not superstitious, the only slave we have who is not, and then he is as strong as a lion."

"If you dare!" almost roared Fairfax. "You will remain under this roof tonight and get out of your head the adventure of that foolish woman."

"But she may be in need of help in the dread Black Inn?"

"It was all her fault—a woman's curiosity, the same that began in Eden and has cursed the world ever since! Remember! nothing of this to the servants. Go to your room. They need not know that the Duchess is out of the house till tomorrow."

"What sort of heart have you?" and the tall, fair beauty of Honeymoon Hall was on her feet, her white face almost touching Fairfax's, and her hands clenched in anger. "You cannot think of leaving Lola Du Berri in the Black Inn all night! It is cruel! I will not listen to your commands. For the first time in my life I will disobey them!"

The girl's mien startled the master of the plantation. Never before had he seen such a display of temper in his sister's child. She looked more beautiful than ever while she faced him, her face tensely drawn and her eyes afire.

"If you leave this house without my consent you can remain out in the world forever!" he cried, his own anger getting the better of him. "I am master here, and here you remain."

With this he left the room, and the girl, standing where she had faced him, heard his footsteps in the hall. The old house grew into silence. The sounds that she was wont to hear at dusk did not greet her ears and the songs of the plantation hands seemed to have been stilled by the new mystery of the Black Inn.

At last Lelia crossed the room and looked into the wide corridor beyond.

No one was in sight.

The wide staircase seemed to invite her, and all at once she leaped forward and sprang up the carpeted steps.

She did not pause till she was in her own chamber, and then with the uncertainty of Lola's fate still staring her in the face, she flung herself upon her couch and buried her face in her hands.

She did not stir till she heard the door open, and looking up she came face to face with the heir of Honeymoon Hall, the handsome Randolph Fairfax.

"Hey! what does all this mean?" he exclaimed, seeing the tear-wet face of his cousin. "Have you and the Duchess Lola had a little tiff? By my life, you look like Niobe. What's the matter, little chit?"

"Everything is the matter," and Lelia held out her hands. "It is terrible, 'Dolph!"

"What is so terrible? It's time we had some excitement at the Hall——"

"But you do not know. Lola is doomed in the Black Inn!"

"What! the Duchess in that old shambles?" and the young man laughed. "Whatever possessed her to go there?"

"Fatal curiosity," was the reply. "I guided her to the place and she is there yet, unless——"

"Unless the ghosts haven't got her?"

"Don't make light of my fears, 'Dolph. You know the evil repute of the Black Inn. Listen to my story and then you can tell me what you think."

"Go ahead, little one," said young Fairfax. "By Jove! this promises to be as interesting as one of those stories in the New York papers."

Seated on the edge of the bed, Lelia began at the beginning, and detailed the ride 'cross country till it terminated in the tragic manner we have witnessed among the shadows of the Black Inn.

"You say you left Lola's horse there?" was the question young Fairfax put when the story was finished.

"Yes. I thought she might find her way out of the place and come home, but that part of the country is strange to her and a veritable labyrinth."

"That is true. Are you sure you called to the Duchess?"

"I called twice at the top of my voice. All I heard was the dismal echo of my last words."

"She went upstairs, did the Duchess?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Then, may Heaven pity her!" and with this young Fairfax averted his face.

"What do you mean? What do you know?" and Lelia was on her feet, and her fingers seemed to sink to the bones of his arm. "What do you know about the secrets of the Black Inn?"

"I know that those who enter there through curiosity leave hope behind."

"My God! Then——"

"The Duchess Du Berri is lost to the world—forever!"

"No, no! Don't say that, 'Dolph. We can rescue her, or at least solve the mystery that surrounds her disappearance. You are brave and are not afraid of the demons said to inhabit the old ruin. You are Randolph Fairfax, and your ancestors are noted for their fearlessness."

"I'm all you say, little one, and probably more, too. The Duchess Lola will never again look upon this world to enjoy it."

"She shall! I say so, and I will see that she is rescued from the hands of the Brotherhood of Ishmael——"

"What about the Brotherhood?" broke in Fairfax. "What proof have you that it has anything to do with the vanishment of the Duchess?"

"The Black Inn is their rendezvous. They are the terror of the district. They are a set of murderous cut-throats!"

"Beware, Lelia. It might not be well with you should your estimate of the Brotherhood of Ishmael reach the ears of the clan."

"I fear them not!" cried the girl, stamping her little foot. "If Lola has fallen into their power and they harm her, they shall have the vengeance of Lelia Fairfax to deal with!"

"Upon my word," laughed young Fairfax, "you look like a real nemesis. So you lost Lola, the Duchess, in the Black Inn?"

"Will you not seek to solve the mystery of her disappearance?"

"I am a Fairfax. You forget that. And the Duchess Lola, by coming here, has put a curse upon Honeymoon Hall."

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE TOILS OF DOOM.

For a few minutes after the departure of Randolph Fairfax, Lelia stood half dazed in her little room.

She had heard it whispered that the coming of the Duchess Lola had placed a curse upon Honeymoon Hall. No one had told her this outright, but she had overheard conversations between father and son to this effect and she had been distraught over the matter.

In what way could this beautiful girl from France, coming to the new world, effect the fortunes of the Fairfaxes? It was a puzzle, a real mystery to her and she could not solve it.

Certainly nothing that Lola had done could do this, and, strange to say, the young duchess had told her but little of her ancestry. She knew that she had an Uncle Gaston, who died just before she left France, but of her mother Lola had said but little.

The minutes wore on and the great house grew still. At last the young girl slipped into the hall and leaned over the banisters. There was a light in the old, high-ceiled library, and she fancied she heard issuing from it the voices of Rodney Fairfax and his son.

"I must know what has become of Lola, I must! I must!" passed through her frenzied brain. "I care not if papa disinherits me, I have grown to love Duchess

Lola, and she must not remain in the Black Inn!"

A little later a robed figure glided from Honeymoon Hall and proceeded toward the stables. It was Lelia.

For her to think, was to act, and she had resolved to solve, if she could, the dread mystery of that night.

It did not take her long to lead forth her own saddle horse, and soon she was flying down the road toward the Black Inn.

It was several miles away, and the heavy clouds banked the the west betokened a storm. Giving the bay the rein, the fair girl pushed on, crossing frail bridges under which roared lively torrents, for of late there had been much rain. On, still on!

"Heaven give me the opportunity to save the Duchess Lola!" she exclaimed. "It cannot be that she is the curse of the house. I will not, cannot believe it."

Once or twice she was almost swept from the saddle by overhanging branches, but she bravely kept her seat, and at last pulled up in front of the accursed place.

The gloom which had settled over it seemed heavier than ever, and the very silence that invested it appeared to her the silence of death.

Lelia led her steed to a certain spot and dismounted. She tethered him to a small tree, and, drawing back for a moment, studied the grimness that confronted her.

She had come back to the Black Inn against a solemn warning of the master of Honeymoon Hall, and now it was too late to draw back.

In another moment she was upon the porch, then she opened the door and stood within the spider-invested room. The air was heavy and still. She could see a little of her surroundings, for a streak of moonlight flickered in at one of the windows and made the place uncannier than ever.

With her courage for her sole companion, the girl went to the stair door and opened it. The steps were cast in shadow and she saw nothing beyond the one upon which she set her tiny foot.

Up the flight she went, feeling the grimy wall on either side and shuddering at the thought of the spiders which she knew must abide there.

At the top of the stairway she paused and heard her heart beat in its cage.

Which way should she go? Ah, in which direction had Lola gone after reaching that particular spot?

The corridor led to the left, as she could faintly see, and she was soon moving away.

Her footfalls gave out but little noise and she stepped as lightly as she could.

Groping down the hallway her hand found a door and then the knob.

But the portal would not open to her, and as she tried it again a flash of blinding light darted zigzag down the corridor.

The storm was almost at hand.

The heavy peal of thunder that seemed to shake the firmament shook the Black Inn from wing to wing, and Lelia, half blinded by the lightning for a moment, clung to the door knob, her strength nearly gone.

"God have mercy!" passed her white lips. "Am I never to leave this accursed place alive?"

Once more she wrenched—wrenched madly—at the knob, and to her surprise it yielded. What would she find inside—the dead body of the Duchess Lola, or the Brotherhood of Ishmael?

It was a relief to her that she found the chamber as dark as the one below.

She paused to gather strength, and in another moment the same awesome flash lit up the apartment.

Lelia Fairfax gave a cry and reeled away. She was in the lodge room of some order.

She saw, revealed by the lightning, paintings, the horror or which sent a chill to her heart. She saw a dais at one end of the room, with the curtain that hung over a throne-like chair, on the back of which was painted a human skull.

But the chamber was empty.

Surely she had invaded the secret meeting place of the Brotherhood. She had come to the spot from which Fairfax had tried to keep her.

Even then, with those grewsome sights about her, her thoughts turned to Lola.

All at once a light, which was not that of the lightning, blazed in her face, for at the same time a door swung wide and she heard the half-muffled voices of men.

The poor girl crouched against the wall, her face as white as her shroud would be some day, and her hands shaking like aspen leaves.

Into the room marched half a dozen men masked to the chin, all wearing a dress like a priest and in the right hand of each was a long naked blade.

If the wall had been yielding Lelia would have fallen through it, but it was as hard as adamant to her back.

She could only stand and stare, her eyes almost shooting from their sockets, and the blood in her veins nearly congealed.

She saw one of the men advance to the throne and seat himself in the chair. As yet, they had not seen her, or at least she prayed they had not.

"Brethren of Ishmael!" said the one on the throne in solemn state, "we have come together in the sacred name of our order. As you see, the Black Inn has been invaded by one of the outer world."

That instant all eyes were turned upon the girl at the wall.

"The child of the outer world has come to spy upon us and she is even now counting us all and looking beneath the masks we wear."

At this, summoning all her strength, Lelia darted from her place and halted in the middle of the room with her face turned to the dread head of the Brotherhood of Ishmael.

"Hear me for the sake of one I love!" she cried, thrusting out her hands. "I am not a spy. I come not hither for the purpose of telling the outer world what I may see within the walls of the Black Inn. I am the adopted child of Fairfax, of Honeymoon Hall. I am but a girl, but my love for the Duchess Lola brought me here and I seek her in this place."

A strange silence followed Lelia's plea.

The dark eyes behind the heavy masks showed no mercy. They seemed to read the innermost chapels of her soul, and over her came a dread that almost caused nature to give up her sway.

"Mercy! mercy for the friend I have lost!" she went on. "I ask none for myself at your hands. I believe you to be what you have called yourselves, the Brotherhood of Ishmael. A few hours since the Duchess Lola Du Berri entered this house and never came out so far as I know. It was her curiosity that prompted her, nothing more, for, until today she had never heard of the Brotherhood. It was my fault, mine alone, for I told her where the Black Inn lay——"

The gloved hand of the man on the throne was suddenly lifted, and Lelia paused.

"Enough has been said! Eyes that should not see within these walls have seen," said the harsh, doomful voice behind the mask. "It is written in the Book of Blood that he, who invades the inner sanctum of the Brotherhood of Ishmael shall die!"

"So it is written!" went round the room.

"But the Duchess Lola meant no harm," cried Lelia. "She is young and not of this country. She could have no ill feeling against the Brotherhood of Ishmael. Give her back to me and we will swear eternal silence regarding the secrets of this house."

"The eye that hath seen shall be darkened and the voice of the intruder shall be silenced!"

These words smote upon the soul of Lelia Fairfax like the knell of doom.

All was lost. She felt it. It was needless to plead for mercy at the bar of the dread Brotherhood.

"The laws of our beloved order must be enforced," proceeded the masked chief. "Let the brethren surround the person who has pried into our secrets."

The circle contracted till the half-dazed girl could have touched each man by putting out her hand.

"The eye that hath seen shall be darkened!" solemnly repeated the chief. "Let the blood of the spy stain the floor of the Brotherhood!"

Lelia, with a wild cry started back. Her brain seemed on fire. And which way she looked, a long blade glistened in midair and a gloved hand held it menacingly above her head.

This very intensely interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Strange things happen, read it. Watch the Ledger in the coming months and you will find in it some of the most interesting stories ever written. With every month we will try to give you a better and more entertaining paper, so, if you are not already a subscriber, you better send in a year's subscription and have the Ledger regularly. Take our advice and attend to this today.

TWICE MARRIED.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"Till death do us part."

Standing at the altar's rail, with the man of God before them, Paul Haverhill and Alice Carle spoke the solemn words that bound their lives together.

"Forever," he said earnestly and tenderly, as they stood apart from all the world, an hour later, face to face with themselves and their own hearts. "It is a solemn word, Alice. Do we realize what it means?"

"I try to," she answered. "It is for life and death, Paul. For earth and Heaven."

You would not think that two hearts who seemed to understand so well what they had undertaken would let anything come between them. You would think that the love which drew them together was strong enough to overcome everything else. You might look for shadows. I do not believe there ever was a marriage which had no shadows in its sky. Sooner or later they come. They may be little ones, and brief ones, for the sunshine of love may dispel them, but clouds there will be. But between two souls who step across the threshold of wedded life, with such deep and earnest thoughts as stirred the hearts of Paul Haverhill and his wife, you would not expect the clouds to linger.

But they did. They came, and they remained. I do not know where they came from. Perhaps neither ever really knew. It was enough to know that they were there.

And as the years went by the sky lost all the sunshine it ought to have held—all the sunshine it might have held if love's work had been wrought out patiently and in gentleness. Both hearts were proud. Their pride might have been a false, cruel pride, but it was there, and neither felt willing to bend to the other. You have seen a little rill of water trickling down a hillside. A leaf, a straw, a mere nothing, drops in its course, and the thread of water divides, and the leaf or the straw, which a breath of air might set adrift, makes two channels where there would have been but one. And the leaf catches another, and another; and a twig is added, and a fallen branch, and from the first tiny barrier that the stream found in its course, one has soon grown up too large to be swept away by the onward rush of waters, or the winds of Heaven. And from that point on the stream diverges, and two channels are worn out where only one ought to have been made.

It was so with the lives of Paul and Alice Haverhill. From a little thing—an unkind or harsh word—a thoughtless speech—the barrier grew, and their lives separated, each one taking its own course.

So years passed away. One little child came to them. Had it lived, it might have set the barrier adrift, and let their lives flow back together. But it stayed only a little while, and went back to God.

At last the end came that they had felt must come sooner or later. They separated, and went their ways, man and wife in name, but man and wife in heart no longer.

At the last—in those days when the old life was being given up, I think there were kinder thoughts in their hearts for each other than there had been for a long time. They were both to blame. They knew it, and they acknowledged it to themselves then as they never had allowed themselves to do before; but their bitter, cruel, stubborn pride would not let them acknowledge it to each other. So much we force ourselves and those about us to suffer from the shameful, bitter selfishness in which we clothe ourselves, requiring others to bend their pride to ours before we will acknowledge that we are in fault. But whatever remorse stirred up either heart was kept hidden from each other. And so, coldly, quietly, they said good-by, and went their different ways. It was forever, they said, to their own hearts. Forever! and they had told themselves, years ago, that the love they pledged was forever!

* * * * *

It was strange, but this man and women, who told themselves that henceforth they could be nothing to each other, could not forget what had been and what might have been, and the longer their separate lives flowed in their divided channels, the keener was the feeling of regret and loss.

But pride kept them apart, as it had come between them. And so, living in the same city, and seeing each other occasionally, but meeting always as strangers, the current of their lives went onward to the sea.

The woman heart of the wife yearned for the love it had lost. It wanted something to lean on. It felt that a time was coming when it could not stand alone. In the day of faltering footsteps, where should it turn for that love which is a staff that never fails?

And he, with his man's heart, felt the need of something to cling to him. A man's heart was made to bear burdens, and for another heart to lean on. His was wearing itself out by doing nothing. It lacked that sense of protectorship which it needed to make it strong and self-reliant. It lacked love most of all, and it yearned for it as a homesick child longs for home. Somehow both of them felt that they were lost in the world. They had wandered away from home. Home! for so long that word had been a mocking sound to them that they hardly dared to take it on their lips.

Perhaps there is an angel telegraph which connects our hearts, and the chemistry of God is so fine and delicate, and so little understood by us, that we make worthless the mysterious combination which sets the wires in operation, and messages can not be transmitted while the battery is rendered inert by the presence of harsh and bitter thoughts. When we cast out these thoughts the wires began to feel the subtle thrill again, which they could never feel when our heart-cells were filled with antagonistic elements, and then the impulsive messages which love prompts run from heart to heart. If this theory is a true one, it may explain how Paul and Alice Haverhill were drawn toward each other by kinder, tenderer thoughts than either had felt for each other for years.

It was an autumn day. The world was bright in its beauty, which is fleeting as dreams are. Pacing up and down the almost deserted park, Alice Haverhill was busy with her own thoughts. She was thinking how brightly life had opened for them, and what a failure it had been.

There was a step on the path beside her. She turned, and was face to face with her husband! Never, in all the long years of their divided lives, had they met alone before.

She turned pale when she saw who it was, and the old habit of reserve threw its mask of icy pride over her face. He gave one quick, keen look into her face. It held a swift, wild hope in it. If she would only lean on him henceforth! Her heart must be so weary, so lonely, he thought. But he could not read it in her face.

She passed him with such a bow as strangers give when two meet outside the crowd. A wild, fierce longing was tugging at her soul. Oh, love, love! her heart cried out.

She turned in sudden impulsiveness, with imploring hands stretched out toward him. The same impulse must have prompted him, for they were face to face again, and their hands were reaching out toward each other.

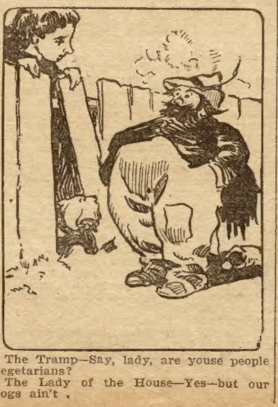
"Oh, Paul!" she cried, "I am starving for love! I am so wretched! so lonely! I was proud, cruel, wicked, and I was blind in my own selfishness. Oh, love me a little, or let me die!"

"Oh, my darling!" he said, and caught her in his arms, and great tears rained over his face, from which the cold, hard look of pride had vanished. "It was I who was cruel and wicked. I need you more than you have need of me. I have wanted you so long!"

* * * * *

And so they were wedded again; in a new, beautiful marriage, which was consecrated by wisdom born of bitter sorrow, they started out to tread the remainder of life together. And the barrier was left behind them, and the current of their lives flowed on henceforth in one still channel to the sea.

Valuable Advice.



The Tramp—Say, lady, are youse people vegetarians?

The Lady of the House—Yes—but our dogs ain't .

BETTER THAN GOLD.

Food That Rebuilds Body and Brain.

"I owe a debt of gratitude to "Grape-Nuts," writes a W. Va. young lady, "and I am glad of this opportunity to pay a little interest on it, although the debt itself I can never hope to remove.

"A few years ago I broke down from over-work and improper food. I was then in a preparatory school and my fondest wish was to enter college the following year.

"But about the middle of the term my health failed, and my brain refused to grapple with the subjects presented to it. Finally, my eyesight giving away, I was taken from the school, and sent to my grandmother's in the country with orders not to open a book while I was there.

"The dear old lady tried every way to console and nurse me back to health, but it looked like failure until the day she brought back from town a box, which, had its contents been pure gold, would have been of less value to me than the little golden-brown granules which it actually contained.

"I did not care about being experimented on at first, but that was before I had tasted Grape-Nuts with Grandma's rich Jersey cream.

"Oh, it was too good to stop eating. And I never have stopped, for I still have Grape-Nuts for breakfast.

"In the course of a few weeks I was back at school again, my health so entirely restored that I was almost a new girl.

"I am now in my junior year in college, president of my class and expect to take an A. M. degree next year. My good health has continued and my eyes, having been strengthened by the general build-up of my whole body, enable me to study all I wish."

"There's a Reason."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville, in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

Not the Same.

Country—We have only three mails out here.

City—Only three? What do all of you girls do for beaux?

How They Started.

Who would imagine that Thomas Buchanan Read, the author of "Sheridan's Ride," a man of infinite genius, who ranks with the great but erratic poets of America, was once a cigarmaker and a sign painter? Of course, it is no secret that James Whitcomb Riley, whose poems of childhood have delighted so many, was not only a sign painter, but at one time essayed to be an actor. Victorien Sardou studied medicine before he made up his mind to be a dramatist. Bret Harte was a compositor in a newspaper office and a miner before he charmed the world with "The Heathen Chinee" and "The Luck of Roaring Camp." Henry Wallace Shaw (Josh Billings) was a farmer and a deckhand on an Ohio river steamboat, and an auctioneer. Probably the experience he gained in these unique callings made him so successful as a humorist of the phonetic spelling type.

George Kennan was a telegraph operator before he began to write about Darkest Russia. He conceived the idea of his futur work while constructing telegraph lines in Siberia. Last, but not least, and perhaps the most conspicuous type of "jack of all trades," who finally strikes his real vocation in middle life, is Jerome K. Jerome, who was in turn tutor, actor, journalist, shorthand writer and solicitor's clerk, ending up as the author of the famous "Three Men in a Boat," and other humorous books, which have convulsed the readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Robert Colyer, the eminent preacher, was originally a blacksmith and spent many an hour over the forge swinging the heavy hammer to the music of the anvil. This occupation, while severe and prosaic, had its uses, for years of hard work brought with it health, strength, good lungs and a brawny frame which served Dr. Colyer in good stead in the pulpit.

Mr. Borrowit—I wish you would help me out a little today.

Mr. Busy—With pleasure. I'll hold open the door.

Nameless, the Cow-Girl

A DRAMA OF THE RANGE

By Adrienne Roucolle

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CHAPTER V.

THE FUNERAL.

NAMELESS at once busied herself with the wounded man, easing his position, arranging bandages to stop the flow of blood, having sent one of the cowboys to the pump for fresh water while she had gone to her room to get some linen bandages—in one word doing for the wounded man all that a nurse could have done. She soon had reduced the bleeding, though it was evident to the men standing around that the internal injuries were such, that, while life might be prolonged, it could not be saved. Nameless thought so, too, but determined to do all in her power to ease the last moments of the dying boy. Nora had joined her by the bedside, but of the two, the young girl was the calmer, and while tears streamed down Nora's cheeks, those of the girl remained dry. After a while Nameless turned to Nora, saying:

"Get the boys' supper ready, Nora. They've been in saddle all day and must be hungry in spite of their sorrow at Dennis' accident. I will stay and watch by the boy while the rest eat."

Nora obeyed, and soon the four cowboys, silent and sad, were eating in the cook shack, while Nameless remained alone with Dennis at the bunk house. The girl had drawn a chair near the bunk, and sat looking at the white, drawn face on which the mask of death was slowly appearing, listening to the labored breath. Now and then she would moisten the white lips with a little whisky and in the oppressive silence of the room, her thoughts kept returning to the seeming injustice of destiny.

Here she was, living and well, a woman who, for weeks, had been calling for death and forgetfulness, while on the bed lay this youth, who, only an hour before was in full enjoyment of health and happiness, but was now about to die. She had often watched the young man as he went about his work, happy, go-lucky, with a song always on his lips and the sunshine of bliss in his eyes and smile, and many a time after watching him, she would unconsciously envy his joy and long with the passionate longing of her breaking heart to experience, if only for an instant, some of the exuberant happiness of this lover of life.

"Oh, Dennis, Dennis," she murmured at last, as her head dropped near that of the dying boy, "how gladly would I exchange places with you. Why was it you, instead of I, who made that mad attempt to ride Black Devil. For weeks I have tried every horse on the place, hoping that one would prove unconquerable and end the life I am not allowed to take myself. And now that I know, I can't even try to share your fate, for that would be suicide, and suicide is the coward's resort. Oh, why, why, was it you instead of I!"

Hot ears blinded the large dark eyes, and though she raised her head and looked at Dennis, she could not see through their mist that the boy was looking at her. At last he spoke in low, broken tones, the words coming with difficulty from his poor, crushed bosom.

"Don't cry, Nameless," he said. "I'm not worth it. It's my fault, anyhow, so don't be cut up about it. I'm dying, ain't I? No show for me, is there?"

Something in the eager, wistful way the questions were asked, struck Nameless like a blow. He wanted to live, yet he was doomed. She had not the courage to tell him the awful truth, so, tenderly rubbing his moist, cold brow, she said gently:

"You'll soon be better, Dennis, so don't worry and don't exert yourself with too much talking."

"You didn't answer my questions, Nameless. That means I've got to go and you're afraid to tell me. I thought as much, but it seemed so tough that I tried to hope."

"Dennis," and she took his hand and pressed it tenderly, "we've all got to die some day and believe me, dear, it's better to go when life is still sweet than to be compelled to live until you long for death as I do."

"You want to die?" and his eyes opened wide with surprise.

"Yes, Dennis, I would bless the hand that would take from me the gift of life, yet there was a time, and that scarcely a year ago, when I was like you, longing for life and all the bliss it seemed to promise. Who knows, Dennis, but by dying now you are saved many bitter trials, many heart breaks in the years to come. God is so good, so wise, so merciful, that we should trust in His wisdom and think that what He does is for the best."

"Speak to me about Him, Nameless, I haven't been very good since I left my old mother, six years ago, and I well nigh forgot the prayers she taught me. Do you suppose He'll hold that against me now, Nameless? I didn't really mean to be bad."

"No, Dennis, I do not think God is ever cruel to any of His children, and I believe He will take to His heart every erring son who is truly sorry. Did you ever hear the hymn, 'Just as I Am,' Dennis?"

"No, I never was much at going to church, besides I was raised a Catholic. But now as there is no priest around, I suppose I'll have to try and get to Heaven the best way I can. Can you sing that hymn for me, Nameless, it might help me on the road, you know."

"I never thought that I would sing again, Dennis, but for your sake I will try."

In the cook shack the cowboys paused in their eating as the girl's voice floated out to them in the silence of the rapidly falling dusk. One by one the boys stopped eating, memories of younger days surging through their hearts, bringing tears to their eyes. When the girl paused after the last verse, Henderson, rising hurriedly from his seat, turned away his head, saying:

"Dog-gone it, that hymn makes a fellow feel mighty funny in the inside," and he walked out of the cook shack, followed one by one by his silent and moved companions.

But Dennis was saying as his hand pressed that of the girl's, which still clasped his:

"That's better, Nameless. It does make the road a little easier. Can't you sing some more?"

Hymn after hymn the girl sang, the words of hope bringing calm and cheer to the dying boy. In the open doorway the four cowboys stood listening to the clear, melodious tones of the voice, until it seemed to them that the girl herself was some angel sent from Heaven to minister to the wants of the wounded boy. Once, Nora had touched Henderson on the arm, saying in a whisper:

"Don't you think Nameless had better come and have something to eat. It's past eleven and she's had nothing to eat since noon."

Henderson had turned gruffly upon her as he answered in low tones:

"Keep still, Nora. Nameless can eat tomorrow and next day, but the boy has got to get his religion now or never. Let the gal help him while she can, she's doing more for him with her singing than a dozen preachers could do in a month with their talking. The poor lad won't bother us long nohow."

After that Nora had kept silent, and having returned to the kitchen, sat down by the range, muttering prayers for the dying cowboy.

Near midnight Dennis spoke again as Nameless paused for a second to moisten his lips with whisky.

"Thank you, Nameless, you've helped me a heap. Now, if you'll keep still for a few minutes, I'll just confess my sins to God, seeing there's no priest around. Just keep holding my hand, though; it feels good to have you near."

For a few moments deep silence, broken only by the labored breathing of the dying boy, reigned in the room, then Dennis opened his eyes, saying:

"I guess I'm about ready now, only I want you to write to my old mother in Kansas and tell her about this, and send her the last month's wages. I haven't helped her as I should. Guess that's one of the things the Lord will have to overlook if He concludes to take me."

"I will write to your mother, Dennis. Where can I find the address?" promised Nameless.

"In a little prayer book in my trunk," answered the boy.

Again he was silent for a few seconds, collecting his strength, then he asked in tones so low that Nameless had to stoop to hear the spoken words:

"Say, Nameless, would you mind answering one question before I go?"

"Certainly not. What is it, Dennis?"

"Could you have loved me a little if I had lived?"

"I love you now, Dennis," she answered.

"No, no, not that way—I mean the—the other kind of love."

Nameless hesitated for a second, then softly replied:

"No, Dennis, it would have been impossible."

"Then, I guess Black Devil did about the right thing by me, and the Lord knew what He was up to. Call the boys, I want to say good-by."

The cowboys crowded about the bunk on which lay their dying companion, and in their rough, but big-hearted way, expressed their regrets and bade him farewell.

"Don't be cut up about it, boys," said Dennis as he saw their gloomy faces, "I'm about ready to go now, thanks to Nameless. She's been mighty good to me, and I hope you'll always stand by her as she stood by me. Now as a last request, I just want you to bury me on the south knoll that overlooks the plains. I'd kind of feel lonely if you'd put me too far from the herd, you know. I was born a cowboy, for as a little tot I loved horses and cows and at sixteen ran away from home to start riding the range and haven't been back, or written home since. I guess they think me dead, or gone to the bad, on the old farm back in Kansas. Nameless is going to write and tell them about me, but I don't want my body sent back. I'd be lonely, I tell you, too far from the range. Guess that's all—oh, no. Nameless, I give you my pony. I broke him myself, and he's gentle. I guess he'll learn to love you as he did me. He's almost human, that horse."

The weak voice broke, and suddenly tears filled the boy's eyes. The others had turned away their heads to hide their emotion, for each understood just what this parting with his pony, faithful companion of many days, meant to the young cowboy.

"I will take good care of him, Dennis, and love him for your sake," said Nameless, tears flowing unheeded down her cheeks.

"Thanks," Dennis murmured feebly, then, in a still weaker voice to his companions, "Don't make any fuss as you bury me, boys, I don't want any fancy box and all them sorts of things. Just dig the grave there on the hilltop and carry me in a blanket to the spot, then lay me in the ground. I'd rather it was that way. It's more simple and less expensive."

"Your last wishes shall be obeyed to the letter, Dennis," said Teddy, his voice husky with emotion he did not try to hide. "Everything shall be done as you say."

"Then I'll just go off to sleep and rest until it's time to go. Good-by, all, in case I don't wake up again."

The large gray eyes closed slowly and the breathing became more labored and oppressed. The end was drawing rapidly near.

Just about sunrise, Dennis again opened his eyes, saw Nameless, who had not moved from her post by the bed, and smiled sadly at her.

"Do you feel better, Dennis?" she asked.

"Oh, yes, all pain has left me. I feel so good all over," then in low, hesitating tones, "Will you kiss me after I am dead, Nameless, just once?"

"I'll kiss you right away, Dennis. I do not approve of keeping the kisses only for the dead."

She rose, stooped over the bunk, and her lips pressed a kiss on the dying cowboy's brow. When she straightened up again, the labored breathing ceased suddenly, a look of peace and bliss rested on the white face so lately drawn in pain, and Dennis McGrimmy was dead.

That evening, just as the sun was sinking in the west, a queer procession left the bunk house, four cowboys on their ponies, each holding a corner of the blanket in which lay the body of Dennis. Back of them, riding the dead man's pony, came Nameless, chief mourner of the sad funeral procession, she, in turn being followed by the two broncho busters who had arrived at the ranch during the day. Nora, alone had remained at the ranch. At the top of the knoll, the body was laid in the open grave prepared eariler in the day, then, after a short reading of a verse from the Bible by Teddy, and the singing of "Nearer My God to Thee," by Nameless, the grave was filled up and piled over with rocks, then, thoughtful and sad, the witnesses of the scene returned to the house, leaving the son of the plains alone to sleep in peace his last long sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLIZZARD.

After Dennis' death a feeling of veneration mingled with the cowboys' love for Nameless, and in her presence a swear word was never uttered, while their manner toward her became one of mingled deference and love. The two horse-breakers soon shared this general feeling of love and respect for the strange, sad girl. They had been told by the other cowboys of her kindness to Dennis and how she had helped his last moments, and this, coupled with her bravery and the manner in which she rode some of the wildest ponies, completely won their admiration. One Sunday evening, some two weeks after the death and burial of the young cowboy, Henderson turned abruptly to the girl as she was assisting Nora with the supper dishes, saying:

"Nameless, would you mind singing them there hymns for our benefit, as you did for Dennis'. We're in need of religion, too, and there is nothing like that voice of yours to make a fellow sorrow for his sins. We're not as bad off physically, as the poor boy, but a whole lot worse morally, that's no cinch. So, if you think it worth your while you might try your hand at saving us also."

The other cowboys had heartily seconded Henderson's request, and though Teddy had not spoken, his eyes had expressed his desire. Nameless looked at the eager faces of these men she was learning so to love, and as her eyes slowly filled with tears, she said:

"I will sing for you, boys, if you wish it, but I'm not fit to pose as a saver of souls."

After the work was done that night she sat by the window and with her eyes fixed afar on the distant outline of the knoll at the summit of which Dennis was buried, she began to sing, her voice, remarkably rich and powerful, bringing to those men unexpected messages of hope and cheer. And Teddy watching her, so sad, yet so resigned, would feel a strange emotion gripping his heart strings, making him long to fold her in his arms and seek to console her as one would an unhappy child. After that Sunday evening, each week Nameless sang to them, always seating herself beside the window looking out toward the lonely grave on the hilltop.

But the fall roundup was drawing near, and Teddy left for Cheyenne to get some extra cowboys to help with the work. When he drove off, Nameless looked after him until he had disappeared in the distance, then putting on her hat, started for the hilltop where Dennis was buried. Sitting on the edge of the little, low mound, she remained long lost in thought, then with that awful need of confiding to some one, she began talking aloud, addressing herself to the dead boy sleeping so calmly in the sod beneath.

"Oh, Dennis, I am afraid and I know not why. Those new cowboys whom Teddy will bring back with him, who will they be? What will they think when they find me here and are told of the mysterious manner in which I came to the ranch? They will return to Cheyenne after their work is done and over barroom counters will speak of the strange cowgirl of the Y2 ranch, until it comes to the ears of some one who knows me, then—then, Dennis, in spite of the repulsion I feel at taking my life, I will have to follow you to the grave, killed by my own hand, for one thing I have determined I shall never return there alive, never, never!"

On she talked to that lonely grave, the only friend in this world in which she dared confide. When toward dusk she returned to the ranch, she felt less sad and oppressed and began helping Nora with the work the same as usual.

During the week of Teddy's absence, Henderson having taken his place as foreman, life at the ranch continued the same as usual, but it seemed to the girl that something was missing from her life. She went about the house and corrals ever seeking for something she did not find, growing more restless as the days wore on. She did not want to admit even to herself that it was Teddy's presence for which she hungered, yet many times each day her eyes were turned in the direction of Cheyenne, seeking the waving line of the horizon for some dark object which might be the returning wagon. In order to ease her impatience, the girl insisted on doing her share of herding, and most of the day spent in the saddle, found her so weary at night that sleep came readily to her eyes and gave to the tired brain some hours of absolute rest from the haunting thoughts that filled it.

Henderson treated her with the respect one might give a queen and the love a kind father might bestow upon a favorite daughter. Before leaving, Teddy had drawn the old cowboy aside and had said:

"Henderson, I must go to Cheyenne and see to the hiring of extra help for the

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Uncle William's Letter

Dear Ledger Readers—It is really very encouraging the way the subscriptions keep coming in. I have to thank you, the first thing I do, because you are so appreciative of our efforts. We are trying our best to give you a good paper and it tickles me to see how quick you are to "catch on." In giving you a good Ledger we are really doing you good, so I guess I'll say a few words specifically about that that sort of thing.

DO GOOD.

Copyright by William C. Hunter.

Doing good is planting seed, the harvest may not show at present, but in the future you are going to reap it.

A man is paid back precisely in the same coin he pays out. If he plants weeds or mean impulses the harvest will be weeds and mean impulses. If he plants seed of good deeds he will harvest good deeds.

Centuries ago it was said "Cast your bread upon the waters and it will return to you many-fold."

The man who is doing good as he goes along, who is lending help, kindly counsel and encouragement will find the world is a pretty good place to live in after all. As he journeys along through life he will find the good he has done in the past has flourished and returned to him in greatly increased proportions, like the bread cast upon the waters.

It is not only the good one actually gets for the good he has done, but it is the profit that comes in the way of happiness he gets for his actions. The true way to obtain happiness is to do something for somebody. You get back out of the general exchequer of good in the world full payment for the good you have done, plus a profit of happiness which comes from the very doing of good.

Now, I would be made happy by your doing a little good to me; for instance, if you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, or if your subscription has expired or is nearing expiration, then if you would just kindly enclose $1.00 to the Ledger I would know that the "bread" I've been casting on the waters was returning to me, as it should. In the meantime, we will send you more and more 'bread" in the shape of mental food, and make you happy, too, if we can. Let me hear from you with the $1.00 so I can thank you next week. Good luck to you, anyhow.

UNCLE WILLIAM.

roundup, the Y2 must furnish five men and we must have at least three on the ranch. I make you foreman in my place during my absence and trust Nameless to your care. Nora is a good woman, but not over bright, and the boys are young; besides, the two horse-breakers are strangers. They might forget during my absence the proper respect due the girl, so I ask you to see to it that her maidenly modesty is not offended by either word or look."

"Trust me for that," replied old Henderson, "that gal has twined herself around my heart in such a way that I believe I'd kill the first man that would dare lay as much as a finger on her. She's an angel, she is, and I'll be d———d if I'll let any one sully her by even an evil thought. You can trust me, youngster. She's safe as long as old Henderson can see to shoot."

"I thought as much, Henderson," said Teddy, as he extended his hand. "Good-by. I will be back inside of a week," and the young foreman had left the ranch with the conviction of Nameless' absolute safety.

Henderson had kept his word. With the faithfulness of a watchdog he had guarded the girl, but there was little need of this rigid surveillance, since the young cowboys felt for Nameless too much sincere admiration, mingled with some awe, ever to dream of forgetting that she was a lady and had to be treated as such.

At last the weary waiting came to an end, for one afternoon Nameless, returning from herding a bunch of cattle off the range, found a dozen strange ponies in the corral and the heavy wagon in which Teddy had driven off, before the kitchen door. The new men were busy helping unload the provisions brought back from Cheyenne.

Though the girl had been counting the hours for this return with a feeling of longing and dread in her heart, now that Teddy was back she felt a sudden timidity about meeting him, and instead of unsaddling her horse and going to the house, she returned to the prairie and did not come back until after dark.

Teddy, who had seen her arrive, had felt a deep pain and keen disappointment to see her ride off again. She surely had not missed him much if she went off again like that after knowing that he had returned. And he had counted the days and minutes, he had chafed at every delay, longing to return to her!

"Bah, I am a fool," he murmured bitterly, as he continued helping the new cowboys unload the supplies he had brought back with him, "why should she have been lonesome? What am I to her, anyway? Just a cowboy like the others."

Still the sky seemed less blue, the sun less bright as it was sinking in the west in a flood of scarlet and gold. The bitter cloud of disappointment darkened everything. When he met Nameless that night his manner toward her was gentle and kind as usual, and, though he seemed less happy than she had expected, the girl thought it was due to fatigue, little dreaming that she had so unconsciously wounded her best friend.

The new cowboys had looked in surprise at the girl, but the deference and respect with which she was treated showed them what would be expected of them in regard to the cowgirl of the Y2 ranch. Besides, that evening when all the boys met in the bunk house for a game of cards and to sample the whisky brought back from town, old Henderson had made them a sort of warning speech.

"I might as well tell you youngsters at once that neither Sanders or I will stand any monkeying from any of you with Nameless. I haven't killed a man yet, though I came mighty near it several times, but I will tell you, honest ginger, that I'll give a dose of lead pills to the first one who gets too frisky with the gal. You fellows mean all right, but you're still colts, unbroke to the ways of society, and you might take her for what she isn't. So I thought best to give you these few words as an eye-opener to save myself the trouble of using the bullets of my gun as eye-closers. Am I right, Sanders?"

"Yes," answered the young foreman, "and let me add that I would discharge immediately any one who would address Nameless in any way which would not be due a lady."

Thus warned the cowboys kept their place, but their curiosity was aroused, and soon from Pete and Martin they got the story of the mysterious manner in which Nameless had come to the ranch, then, later, during the campfires of the roundup, they told the other cowboys until, in reputation at least, Nameless became known throughout the range as the smileless cowgirl of the Y2, since, though she had been on the ranch over three months, no one had ever seen her smile.

At the breakfast table the following morning, Teddy had said to Henderson:

"I've changed my mind about the roundup, Henderson; I will go myself this time and leave you and Pete and Martin to look after the ranch."

"Why that change, Sanders?" asked Henderson, looking up surprised.

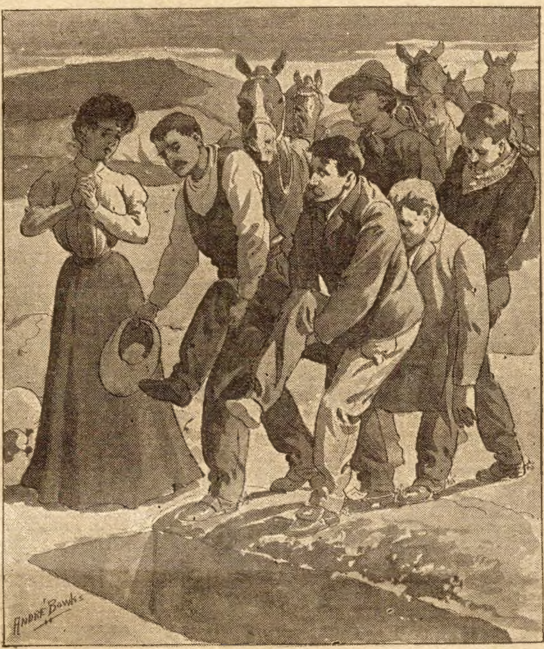
Teddy flushed beneath his tan and, without looking up from his plate, knowing that Nameless' dark eyes were fixed upon him, he answered:

"Why, simply because I think I would like the change; besides, you can do the work here as well as I can."

Nameless kept on with her work by the stove, a sudden pain in her heart, the nature of which she did not yet understand. So he was going away again, for two months this time, maybe for more? He surely had not been so foolish as she, and missed her as she had missed him. While the boys were finishing their breakfast she went out in the open air of the early dawn, the heat of the kitchen becoming suddenly oppressive.

"Why should he miss me?" she murmured. "I am nothing to him but a poor, helpless girl he has befriended. He has, perhaps, a sweetheart in Cheyenne, and he longs for the solitude of those long rides on the prairie to think of her at leisure. Besides, it is better thus; I don't want him to think too much of me, for I don't want him to ever regret having met me."

Two days later the Y2 outfit started for the roundup. One man was detailed to drive the "chuck" or provision wagon, the same man acting also as cook. Each of the five cowboys, counting Teddy, had five mounts each, aside from the ponies they were riding, which made quite an imposing showing as the men started off in the early morning of a bright September day, the cowboys, happy and full of life, singing and shouting in the mere joy of living and the freedom of the plains. The roundup meant plenty of hard riding, days and days in the saddle beneath the hot sun of the Indian summer, which is sometimes more oppressively warm than the blazing heat of July. But it meant, also, the pleasures of the campfire, with whisky and cards, the broncho racing when the risk of breaking one's neck adds zest to the race, the stories told at night beneath the stars, the good natured rivalry at seeing who could rope a steer the quickest; in fact, the thousand and one events of each day which make the life of the plains so attractive to the born cowboy.



The body was laid in the grave.

Teddy and his men departed, and it would be a couple of months, or at least six weeks before they would return. As long as he could see the ranch, the young foreman turned in his saddle, waving his hat toward the lonely figure of a woman standing outlined against the white line of the sky, then, when he could see her no longer, a feeling of loneliness took possession of his heart, and this did not leave him for one minute during the time of the roundup, which that year lasted seven weeks.

To ease this feeling of solitude and unrest, Teddy threw himself with greater zest into the work at hand. The first one up in the morning, he was the last one to go to bed at night, while during the day he was always where the hardest work was to be found. His skill at roping and holding the wildest steers soon became the talk of the camp, and, when about the middle of the roundup, the man who had been acting as foreman was taken sick and had to be sent back to Cheyenne, Sanders was at once elected as his successor.

To be the foreman of a roundup is an honor sought after by most cowboys, since the mere fact of having been named to the post stamps you at once as an expert in your calling.

Teddy, however, took his new honors as a matter of fact, and he kept on with his work without any change in his manner toward his companions. Naturally a born leader of men, Sanders so managed the work and the men that, without shirking the one or overworking the others, he had finished the roundup a week sooner than it had ever been done before.

After the closing of the roundup, when all the Y2 cattle had been cut out and herded back toward their own range, Teddy and his men made a careful selection of the fat cattle and, putting them in a herd by themselves, Teddy and three of the men drove these on to Cheyenne, where they would be joined by another herd of fat stock from the ranch itself, these to be all turned over to Mr. Markham's agent, who would ship them either to Denver or to Chicago. The best of the cattle, mostly cows and young stock gathered during the roundup, were left in charge of the other cowboys, who, by easy stages were to drive them back to the Y2 ranch.

Nameless had watched Teddy depart with pain in her heart, feeling lonesome the moment she could no longer recognize him in the distant haze of the horizon. Henderson, coming upon her as she still stood looking out toward the vanishing specks in the distance, said to her in his kind, fatherly way:

"You seem sorry to see the boys go, gal? Don't you think Pete and Jim and me good company?"

"It is not that," she hastened to assure him, as a flow of crimson came to her cheeks. "I was simply envying them, that is all."

"You should have been born a boy, Nameless; you have in you the making of a dandy good cowboy."

"I shouldn't have been born at all," thought the girl drearily, as she walked listlessly back to the house.

But time passed, the cowboys, with the young stock and the cows, returned from the roundup, then in the week following, Teddy himself came back from Cheyenne. The extra men were paid off and dismissed, and life at the ranch resumed its normal aspect.

As winter was now near at hand, the corrals had been cleaned out, the sheds and fences repaired, and the cattle all brought within the fenced enclosure of the ranch, which extended for miles and miles along the creek. In case of a storm the cattle could be herded in the immense corrals, and the work of the cowboys would then simply consist in feeding to the stock the hay gathered during the summer on the large strips of irrigated land along the creek bottom, and the watering of the stock.

Winter came later than usual that year, and it was the middle of December before the first bad storm occurred. The day had been dark with rolling masses of clouds chasing each other in the west, from which direction a strong wind was blowing. Long before dusk the cowboys began coming in with their herds, making them secure for the night within the corrals, because of the threatening storm.

"We'll have a bad snowstorm before morning," Nameless heard old Henderson remark to the boys, and the girl had started out at once to catch Firebug, the pony given her by Dennis. She did not wish the horse to be out that night if it was going to snow, for the lonely girl had rapidly learned to love the pony, the last gift from the boy who, with his dying breath, had almost avowed his love for her.

But the animal, usually so gentle as to come at her call, today was in a playful mood and refused to let her catch him. He would allow her to get up quite close, then, with a mischievous look in his bright eyes that made him appear almost human, he would race madly away for a few yards, then pause to wait for her. On she followed intent on catching him, not noticing that she was getting further and further from the house, and that the night was falling rapidly, intensified by the flying clouds which now covered the whole sky. The wind, too, was becoming stronger, and small flakes of snow were beginning to fall.

"Firebug! Firebug!" she called. "Come here, sir, come at once, I tell you!"

But the storm was upon her. With a roar, a gust of wind and snow swept around her, nearly knocking her off her feet, the horse becoming lost in a whirling sheet of white. With a sudden qualm of terror, Nameless realized that she was alone in a blizzard. She turned to retrace her footsteps, but the wind, blowing furiously from all directions at once, seemed to buffet her on every side, its roar swallowing up all other sounds. Bravely she fought her way forward, taking three steps and being pushed back two. Breathless, cold and wet with the soft falling snow, she battled on. She was not afraid of death, it had no terrors for her, still, the animal instinct within her forced her forward toward safety. But her strength was rapidly failing her. Only those who have ever attempted to face a Western blizzard know what it means, this battle with the wind and blinding snow.

Suddenly she stumbled over something and fell her full length on the ground. Too spent to rise to a standing position, she lay there half-dazed. All at once she realized where she was.

"Dennis' grave!" she murmured weakly. "I didn't think I would join you so soon, Dennis, but it's for the best. I shall die and no one shall ever know my secret. Teddy, good-by, Teddy!" and she closed her eyes.

A soft mantle of snow was rapidly covering her, and a feeling of delicious warmth was following the chill of a few minutes before. If this was death it was surely very pleasant, just like falling asleep, and she was contented.

This very interesting story develops numerous dramatic and thrilling situations as it proceeds. Look out for it next week. If you like the Ledger, and we feel sure you do, we would like to have you send in a subscription and take it regularly. A great many thrilling and unusual stories will appear in it during the coming year. You will find it a weekly treat, hence you had better send in your subscription now. Let us hear from you.

DROPPED COFFEE.

Doctor Gains 20 Pounds on Postum.

A physician of Wash., D. C., says of his coffee experience:

"For years I suffered with periodical headaches which grew more frequent until they became almost constant. So severe were they that sometimes I was almost frantic. I was sallow, constipated, irritable, sleepless; my memory was poor, I trembled and my thoughts were often confused.

"My wife, in her wisdom, believed coffee was responsible for these ills and urged me to drop it. I tried many times to do so, but was its slave.

"Finally Wife bought a package of Postum and persuaded me to try it, but she made it same as ordinary coffee and I was disgusted with the taste. (I make this emphatic because I fear many others have had the same experience.). She was distressed at her failure and we carefully read the directions, made it right, boiled it full 15 minutes after boiling commenced, and with good cream and sugar, I liked it—it invigorated and seemed to nourish me.

"That was about a year ago. Now I have no headaches, am not sallow, sleeplessness and irritability are gone, my brain clear and my hand steady. I have gained 20 lbs. and feel I am a new man.

"I do not hesitate to give Postum due credit. Of course dropping coffee was the main thing, but I had dropped it before, using chocolate, cocoa and other things to no purpose.

"Postum not only seemed to act as an invigorant, but as an article of nourishment, giving me the needed phosphates and albumens. This is no imaginary tale. It can be substantiated by my wife and sister, who both changed to Postum and are hearty women of about 70.

"I write this for the information and encouragement of others, and with a feeling of gratitude to the inventor of Postum."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

A Home Body.

Winkers—I haven't seen you at the club for a week. You seem to have become a great home-body lately.

Blinkers—Yes. Wife's away.

Worry Hurts, Work Doesn't.

All our troubles are about things which never happen. We suffer through fear about tomorrow. When tomorrow comes the thing we worried about doesn't occur. If we work hard and keep busy we don't have time to worry. There is no real trouble or hard luck in the world but incurable sickness and death. Everything else in the world can be outlived and overcome.

We can shut our eyes and imagine we see a beautiful rose, or we can imagine we see a horrible murder. Both look real, but both are merely imagination. They are only mind pictures. Our worry is always only in the mind. When we think, we either let our mind run into worry or into pleasant thoughts. The great cure for worry is to occupy our minds with our work and with pleasant thoughts and then we kill worry. There is a wonderful book called DOLLARS AND SENSE which tells all about worry and happiness and how to live and act to get joy out of life. This book has 80 great helping chapters that tell us how to think, live, work and act to make our lives happy and full of peace and contentment.

You can get this book by sending 25 cents in stamps to A. Hunter & Co., Oak Park, Ill. The editor of this paper believes this wonderful book has done more to drive away the blues than anything ever published.

Everything in this great book is so simple, so sensible and so plain that you feel better the moment you start reading it. We want all our readers who want comfort and help to read this wonderful book. It brings joy and sunshine and drives away clouds and sadness.

Consolation.

Miss De Fine—I hope the report that your daughter and her husband do not get along well together is untrue.

Mrs. DeShine—It is too true. The trouble is that he is jealous of her. The fool! He might know there is no cause for jealousy.

Miss DeFine (thinking of the girl's plainness)—Indeed he might; but love is blind, you know.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignetto's Beauty Cream eand Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491. Blairsville, Pa.

A Stutterer's Test.

Mama—Good gracious, Georgie! What is the matter with Freddie Jones? Is the child having a fit?

Georgie—No, Mama. You know Freddie stutters, and we bet he couldn't say "altitudinosoty" before Bobbie ran twice around the block.

THE CHICAGO LEDGER

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CHICAGO, ILL.

ALLIED PRINTING TRADES UNION LABEL COUNCIL 230 CHICAGO, ILL.

GENTLE JABS.

Speech that is too flowery should be nipped in the bud.

The right kind of doctor leaves well enough alone.

Blunt language is often used in making sharp retorts.

A coat of arms doesn't always hide the family skeleton.

It isn't a secret if a woman hesitates in the telling of it.

Many a truthful man breaks his word because he stutters.

We can die only once—much to the regret of the undertaker.

Even when the worst comes it is best to make the best of it.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" also applies to family trees.

Conveniences of the age include improved wigs and better false teeth.

People seldom get that tired feeling from carrying the burdens of others.

It takes more than an eye-opener to make the toper see the error of his ways.

The easiest way for a man to get married is to let a young widow get on his trail.

Everybody encourages the fads of the men who are willing to spend money on them.

Even a married man may have his own way—after his wife decides on the direction.

When the other fellow offers to compromise it means that you have the best of it.

Some men decline to look upon the wine when it is red because they prefer another color.

A young man might have a poor opinion of the girls he is fond of if they were his sisters.

By covering up their tracks some men get credit for walking in the straight and narrow path.

A word to the wise is sufficient—if he is paying for it at his end of the long-distance telephone.

Some men walk as if they needed glasses and some others walk as if they had taken too many.

It matters not whether a man lives well or merely exists, so long as he doesn't know the difference.

Most young men will do anything a young and pretty sister asks—if she is some other fellow's sister.

It's all right for a man to be a dreamer of dreams provided he wakes up occasionally and gets busy.

It is surprising how near a young widow can come to proposing to a man without actually doing it.

The worst thing about rich relations is the way they look down on you because you are not rich enough to look down on them.

There's nothing a woman enjoys more than telling how much better her husband's digestive apparatus works since she married him.

A Miracle of Love

By CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD

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Begun in No. 28, July 11. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IX.

"LOVE CANNOT DIE, IT LIVES FOREVER."

"YOU ARE wrong, uncle, love such as mine cannot die, it lives forever."

"But, Kerle——"

"Suppose we do not discuss this matter."

"As you please, lad; I'm sorry."

"We'll let it rest, but you said you had something to tell me."

"Yes, I have. My boy, have I been good to you?"

"Good, uncle, is scarcely the word, it's not strong enough. You took me a miserable little shaver and have done everything for me."

"I'm glad you feel that way, because I hope you can see your way clear to fulfill the dearest wish of my life."

"And what is that?" Kerle asked, unaccountably his heart contracting.

"Boy, you have known Myrtle ever since she was a baby, and you know how lovely and sweet she is, a girl any man might well be proud to win. How any one could ask for any one different I cannot see," and yet, as he spoke the man seemed to see a fair, girlish face, soft brown eyes and blue-black hair. Kerle, too, saw the same face, only he thought of it as further beautified by the love light playing over it.

"It is my dearest wish to see her happy. My lad, I have no right to say this to you, but I think you have guessed her secret; she loves you, and if she does not become your wife there can be no happiness in life for her."

Kerle put up his hand, and spoke almost sternly:

"Stop, uncle," he said gravely, "I cannot marry one girl when my heart is given to another."

"Kerle, Kerle, if I could only make you see how wrong you are! You imagine you love that girl, but you do not. Be guided by my advice. Myrtle is the wife for you, and the poor, dear girl loves you. Her happiness and mine hang upon your decision."

Kerle had not yet fully recovered from his long illness, he was lonely with a heartsick loneliness, and the wishes of his uncle very strongly influenced him at all times. No mere words could have appealed to him as the expression on his uncle's face. It seemed the acme of cruelty to refuse. Laurel had proven herself little better than a flirt, and although his heart was still filled with her, he knew that it was not healthy or natural to mourn as he had been doing. Besides, if Myrtle did love him, and that strange glance he had intercepted the night before seemed to bear out his uncle's statement, he ought to be proud to have won such distinction, for he knew how particular the girl was.

"I do not love her, I may never do so," he said brokenly.

"You will, you cannot help it," returned the elder man with decision.

"But, uncle, I have no heart for love making," and he sighed deeply.

"Do you suppose a girl like Myrtle will expect a common, vulgar courtship like——"

"Wait, uncle, be careful," Kerle broke in quickly.

"I beg your pardon, my boy."

"It flatters me, I'll confess it, to have any one care for me, but, uncle, I do not think I was made to love lightly, and I have never thought of Myrtle as anything but my sister."

"Nonsense!"

"It's true. Still, uncle, I want to please you, and if you think she really does care for me—I declare I feel like a cad to be talking over her affections in this open way—I'll try and see what I can do, although, frankly, I'm afraid I will be making a big mistake."

"There will be no mistake, lad, and if you will do this, any debt you may feel you owe me will be discharged a thousand times, for her happiness is very dear indeed to me," and his smile had something so inexpressively sweet that the young man was touched by it, although his reason told him he was doing a very foolish thing.

"Still, perhaps her love may serve to blot out memory, I may be able to forget Laurel when I see love for me in Myrtle's eyes," Kerle thought as his uncle left him alone, and then he hated himself for a thought that came to him. All his life he had disliked red-headed women. Light himself, he admired a brunette type almost to the exclusion of the blonde, and to him a light woman was not at all beautiful. While he liked Myrtle, he did not in the least admire her, nor was she even pretty in his sight, and yet he had bound himself to ask her to be his wife.

"Poor, dear old uncle," he said half to himself, "I don't seem to be of much use in the world, so if I can make him happy it'll be something," but his sigh was very deep, and he wished that he was a woman so he might sit down and cry out the wretched misery in his honest young heart.

"Oh, this loving, it's a miserable sort of business! Hurt, hurt, hurt from beginning to end. The end hasn't come for me yet, and I'm afraid it never will," and again he sighed.

"Fancy my life being blighted this way! Why can't I be a man and forget. I will. I have the chance of winning a woman the world calls beautiful, whom I know to be good, sweet and accomplished, and I won't think of those fatally precious hours in that old garden. I hate roses, I hate moonlight, I hate the song of birds, in fact, everything that reminds me of Laurel. How could she be so false, how could she?" and the young man threw out his arms as he asked his question of the empty air.

Once again he read the little note, already worn with much handling:

"I have changed my mind. You and I are not suited to each other and I release you. Your ring accompanies this. I must ask you to regard me in the future as a stranger. Laurel Davenport. To Kerle Winston."

Not a word about his illness, not a word of explanation. It was something he could not understand, he could not.

"I would have sworn, darling, that you were all mine for eternity," he whispered, and there swept over him such a soul sickness that he felt weak. Again he could see that lovely face, so frank and loyal, then he thought of her turning those magnificent brown eyes upon Lee Foster, and he groaned aloud.

"It makes a man lose his faith in all humanity to think how she has thrown me over," he groaned. "To sell herself for Foster's gold! It's awful! Yes, I'd better be thankful there is one unsoiled woman in the world, one who can and does love, bless her dear heart," and he thought gratefully of Myrtle.

"Some day I'll tell her, and she will understand," he thought, and found comfort in that thought. "Yes, uncle's right, I will be happier engaged to her, than going about in this miserable way," and he rose suddenly, resolved to hunt up Myrtle and get the thing settled before further brooding weakened his purpose.

CHAPTER X.

"LOVE COMES TO ALL ALIKE."

Kerle found Myrtle reading in her sitting room and felt soothed by her presence the moment he entered the room. She was a lovely sight as she lay back in her big cane chair, clad in a soft, thin, blue dress, trimmed with cream lace. The delicate hue brought out her magnificent coloring, and the beauty of her eyes, and Kerle was astounded to find that he did admire her after all, she was so fresh, dainty and sweet. That was one of her chief charms, a certain sweetness of expression and manner.

"Am I interrupting?" he asked, a little nervously.

"No, Kerle, you never do that," she smiled back, pushing some books from a chair, the mate of her own. "Sit down, I am sure you are much more entertaining than my book," and her eyes sparkled.

They both laughed, and Kerle said, as he sank back in the chair:

"Watch out, Merle, don't flatter too much. All sweets don't agree with me."

"You spoiled boy, when have you been denied anything?" she asked playfully.

A shadow came over the young man's face. He had been denied the dearest thing in life.

"I used to tell guardy that he was spoiling you for anything useful, but I stopped finally, for I saw it did no good. Kerle, that man adores you."

"And you Merle, dear?" Kerle responded, resolutely chasing away the shadow.

Her expressive face flamed crimson, and she said in a low tone:

"He spoils me, too. See here, what he sent up to me this morning before I was dressed," and she opened a little box she took from her pocket.

"Say, it's a beauty," he said slowly, as he looked at one of the finest sapphires he had ever seen. The jewel was fashioned into a pendant, and was almost priceless. On its blazing surface her monogram had been cut, and so skillfully that it only showed in certain lights.

"He knows how to make things nice for us both, and now he's been planning further," and Kerle leaned forward and looked straight into the girl's eyes.

"I suppose so, I'm never surprised at anything the dear man does," Myrtle said lightly.

"He has sent me to tell you about it, dear."

"Yes," she said. There was a new note in the young man's voice she had never heard before.

"Yes. It's what we both might have expected. Merle, he has taken us two, reared us as his own children, and now he wants us to be bound still closer to him."

"I don't understand," she said, her face slowly paling.

"He wants us to marry, dear; are you willing?"

The young man could not put any more warmth in his words than he did, but the hesitancy and visible embarrassment showed plainly that he was deeply moved, and Myrtle did not notice the lack of love making.

All the light and life seemed to die out of her face. She was like one bereft of every hope, and for a full minute she said nothing, then she asked gently:

"Is his heart set on it?"

"Absolutely."

Again there was silence. Kerle took courage and looked at the girl he was thus strangely wooing, and was astonished at her expression. Such despair he had never seen before. This was not the face of a girl in love, who has just been told that she is to be married to the man of her choice.

"What is it, dear?" Kerle asked tenderly. He was very fond of Myrtle, although he did not love her, and it hurt him to the quick to see her troubled.

"Kerle, tell me, do you want this?"

"Yes, indeed I do," he returned, but there was no love in his voice.

Myrtle suddenly sprang to her feet, and began walking back and forth.

"Wait a minute," she said commandingly, checking him as he started to say something. Stopped by her, Kerle sat and watched her graceful figure moving back and forth, suddenly she halted and looking him straight in the eyes, asked firmly:

"Kerle, don't you love some one else? Please tell me the truth."

He did not answer, only stared back.

"I thought so. You do not love me, not in the least, and yet you ask me to marry you," and she laughed a little bitterly.

"Myrtle, listen, I'll tell you all about it. I did, I still do—for one cannot tear such things out of the heart in a minute—love a girl, but she proved false, bitterly false, and I need you, dear, need you, oh, so much, and you shall have my love, every bit of it. I will try with all my heart to make you happy and do just as you wish. Uncle's heart is set upon the marriage, and I feel as though I could not oppose him. Still, you understand, I am only speaking from my standpoint. You are worthy of the best and truest love a man can give, and you ought to hate me for coming to you as I do, but——"

"I understand, poor boy, the uncle wants it. I know, I know. If you are under obligations, what am I? Kerle, look at me," and she turned her burning eyes back on him. They had wandered to the window.

"Do I look like a very happy woman? Scarcely. If you have suffered from unrequited love, so have I. Yes, my heart is breaking, Kerle, because the man whom I love dearer than life does not, cannot return that love. Pity me, Kerle, for I am so young and life is so long," and she fell back in her chair, crying as though her heart would break. He was kneeling by her side in a minute, his arms about her, his voice, tender with sympathy, soothing her. Gradually he drew the little red-gold head to his shoulder and wiped away the tears.

"Myrtle, we can understand and help each other. Can you sacrifice yourself to uncle's wishes?"

She sat up, although she did not withdraw from the strong young arms.

"Tell me, Kerle, do you think we can learn in time to love each other?"

"Can we, of course we can?" he cried, and he believed at that moment that they could.

"You won't expect me to love you right away, then?" she continued.

"No, dear, not until you really and truly do," and she smiled through her tears as he spoke.

"You are sure it is your uncle's wish?"

"He was talking to me about it not an hour ago."

"Then, Kerle, if you wish it, too, if you are sure we are not making a mistake, I am willing," she said slowly, and the two kissed each other, but not like lovers.

"And now we'll tell uncle," Kerle said tenderly. Her tears and confession had gained her his pity and sympathy and he utterly forgot about her hair.

She gave a little shiver, then said bravely:

"Of course, he must be told. Kerle, you are sure, are you?"

"Sure of what, dearest?" he returned.

"Sure we are not making a mistake?"

"Myrtle, you like me, don't you?"

"Of course I do, dear Kerle."

"Is there any one else, except the one whom you would be willing to marry?"

"No, no, no!"

"Will it be any comfort to know that you are giving both uncle and me great pleasure, and that I think that it was all meant for the best, and that you are the wife intended for me?" he asked, trying to quiet her fears and yet to keep strictly within the spirit as well as the letter of the truth.

"I think it is."

"Then, dear?"

"Yes, I know I'm foolish, but Kerle, I had planned something so different," then she remembered so had he, and with a little cry she held out her arms to him, and he clasped her to his heart. In that moment they were nearer in spirit than ever before.

"And now we will go and tell your uncle," Myrtle said, daintily withdrawing herself, and looking, woman-like, in the glass to see what damage her tears had inflicted upon her flower-like face.

CHAPTER XI.

"A BOY'S LOVE, SAY YOU, YET IT IS TRUE AND SWEET."

"How'd you like the game, Laurel?"

"Oh, Tom, it was grand!" and there was excitement in the girlish voice.

"Liked it, did you?" and Tom grinned. The pleasure of his triumph was intensified tenfold.

"And I was so proud I knew the pitcher. If you could have heard all the nice things said about you," and Laurel laughed as she had not done since she had received that cruel visit from the elder Mr. Winston.

"I did it all for you, Laurel, it was all for you," the young fellow said, a little brokenly.

"No, no, Tommy, don't talk nonsense," Laurel said, a little nervously. "You did it for the honor of the team. My, how proud they are and what a great thing it is for Edenthorpe!"

"It sounds good to hear you say such things, girlie," Tom said a little huskily.

"Does it? I'm glad," was her simple reply.

The moon was riding in the heavens, shedding a blaze of glory over the apple trees, now loaded with mellow fruit, and across the rustic seat. She could smell the roses, hear the twittering birds and her heart ached almost to breaking.

"It's awful to have so much misery in this world," she thought to herself. She and Tom were sitting on the veranda, although he had suggested their going into the garden. She never sat there now, her memory was too good.

"I don't care a hang about Edenthorpe, Laurel, not a cent, it's you I did it for," he persisted, trying to see her face, which she kept in the shadow of the vines.

"Well, it's awfully nice of you," she returned, cheerfully. She had never thought Tom sentimental before.

"No, it's not goodness, but love, Laurel," he blurted out.

"Tom!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, Laurel, listen, dear, please. I've always loved you, even when I pulled your hair. I just hated Kerle Winston because he could be the gentleman, and I was a little rowdy, but I loved you all the same. Now I'm a man grown, and that love has become too much for me, and so I've come tonight to tell you about it and ask you to be my wife."

Tears streamed down Laurel's face. There was something so manly and frank about the boy's words that she was touched to the quick.

"Why can't I love him?" she thought, but instead of Tom's rather commonplace face came another, classical in its great beauty, yet false, false to all ideas of honor and integrity. Again she could hear the tender voice saying:

"We love each other, and as long as there is life in our hearts, we will love." Yet the next morning he had sent for his ring and release. Strange are the ways of man!

"I know I'm not worthy of you, no one is, dear Laurel. You seem like a little queen here."

"Oh, Tom, and I born in a work-house!" she cried, so bitterly that he was astonished.

"Why, Laurel, how can you?" he cried. "I wish no one had ever told you. None of us who know you ever think of it, honest we don't. You are so sweet and good and true, the best and biggest man in the world might be honored if you'd marry him, and here I have the nerve to try myself, but Laurel, there has never been any one else; isn't there a little hope?" and he tried to keep his voice from trembling, but in vain.

For one wild moment Laurel was tempted. This boy's love was perilously sweet, and she longed to rest her weary heart. Perhaps if she accepted she might learn to forget, then her better self came to the rescue.

"Tom, dear Tom, listen. I can't tell you how much good your words have done me, but I cannot say yes, although I would like to."

"Then say it, please do, oh, do!" and he eagerly sought her hand.

"No, Tom, I cannot."

"Laurel, do you love some one else?" he asked suddenly.

"Yes, Tom," simply.

"Laurel, is it——" a hand was laid over his mouth, the one she had drawn from his clasp, and she cried almost frantically:

"Don't, Tom, don't try to guess, spare me!"

"The d———d scoundrel!" Tom said, half under his breath.

"Oh, Tom, dear Tom, I'm so miserable!" Laurel sobbed, and poor Tom was powerless to help.

"I couldn't make it up to you in any way, I suppose?" he asked hesitatingly.

"No, I must fight it out alone," she returned, trying to control herself.

"Well, all I've got to say is that if you ever want a friend, Laurel, you know where he is," Tom continued, his eyes enviously fastened upon the bowed head. Kerle Winston was responsible for all this heartache. It seemed impossible, and yet it must be true, there was no one else who could have touched her so deeply.

"Thanks, Tom," Laurel whispered, and he continued:

"I guess it's the best thing I ever did to love you, Laurel, it's kept me out of lots of scrapes and it will still, and I don't want you to worry about me, for I'll be all right you know, I'm a man. Not that I can forget, but then, a man's tough you know," all his bravely said with trembling lips and broken voice.

"You are the dearest boy that ever lived!" Laurel cried impulsively, laying both her little hands on his right one, "but you must forget. I want your friendship so much, so you must forget the love and be just my own dear friend Tom."

He smiled slightly, as he raised one of the little hands to his lips.

"It's not so easy to forget, dear, but I'll not bother you. You call me a boy, but I'm not that, but a man, and my love is pretty strong, still I'll get along all right, so don't worry," and when he left her half an hour later, it was repeating the same words.

Laurel watched him through the gate, where she had stood and waited for Kerle, and then with a bitter cry she vanished into the house, to cry out all night long to the mother who had died in giving her birth.

Tom swung out of the gate, more miserable than ever before. A strong purpose, though, glowed in his eyes, and he did not rest that night until he had telegraphed to the scout of the White Sox:

"Am ready to accept offer. Will come to your address."

Laurel had lost a lover and the White Sox had gained a pitcher.

CHAPTER XII.

"THE TENDER DEEB LOVE OF CHILD FOR PARENT IS MORE THAN PASSING SWEET, THERE IS A TOUCH OF DIVINITY ABOUT IT."

Doctor Davenport entered the little cottage, his step faltering, his benign face overcast by a cloud, and Laurel could not understand, for, never before in her young life had she seen her adopted father other than cheerful, full of thought for others. Now he seemed like one walking in his sleep; and the girl was sorely puzzled.

For a time she said nothing, but tenderly helped him into his shabby dressing gown and slippers, but even when he was seated at the meal her skilfull hands had prepared, he was still moody, and at last she broke through her usual rule, and asked gently:

"Anything bothering, daddy?"

He looked up hastily, hesitated a moment, then said quietly:

"Finisn your supper, dear, and then we will talk," and she did not dispute, although her simple viands seemed to choke her, for she feared some catastrophe, and she was not wrong in her surmises, for when she had cleared away the dishes and came into the study, to sit by his side, she learned of the misfortune which had fallen upon them. Unfortunately it had not come singly. Doctor Davenport told her that a year before he had been induced to invest in some vacant land all his small savings. That every day he had received notice that, as his title was not clear to this land, he forfeited it, and he was forced to bear this calamity which swept away all he had managed to accumulate. As though this was not enough, he had been told, very kindly and gently, that his services were no longer required at the little church where he had preached and taught for more years than Laurel numbered in her life.

"Why, father, that's impossible!" she cried, her ire rising. This good, dear old man was the noblest clergyman they could have. Although seventy-five, his sermons still rang with youthful fervor, tempered with years of fruitful experience, and he was loved by every individual.

"It is true, my child. Edenthorpe is growing and they feel they need some one younger and stronger to build up the church, and I suppose they are right," and he tried to look resigned.

"The Lord knows best," the good man said, a little wearily, "but, my child, He alone knows what will become of you."

"Father, I can work," Laurel said stoutly.

"At what, dear? I feel I have been very remiss, for I have not trained you for any special work. You are still such a child."

"No, father, I'm no longer a child, I'm a woman," she said sadly, and for the first time the old man was conscious of the change. She was a woman, with a sadder expression in her brown eyes than ought to dwell there. Her mouth drooped painfully when she was not smiling, and there was a dignity which only comes through sorrow.

"My child, some unhappiness has come to you, and I have not seen it before," Doctor Davenport said slowly.

"Yes, daddy dear," Laurel said, with a quiver of the lip.

"Would it help any to tell me, darling?"

Laurel shook her head. "No, dear, I cannot tell any one," she said gently.

"My poor lassie! Cast your trouble on the Lord, dear, He alone knows how to soothe the broken heart," he whispered, stroking the dark hair, for Laurel had laid her weary head against his arm, half kneeling by his side. His gentle touch comforted her, and they remained in this position for some minutes, then Doctor Davenport asked:

"Where is your locket and chain, dear? I think we will take it to a jeweler and see if the locket can be opened. It may contain some trace of your identity. Hitherto I have not wanted to find out who deserted your hapless young mother, but now, when you seem cast upon the world, perhaps it might be best."

"I have lost it, daddy," the girl said in a low tone, remembering with a rush of sorrow how and where she had lost it.

"Have you, child? Well, that is too bad, for through it we might have discovered something, but you cannot help it. Well, such times as these try us out and show the mettle of which we are made. We are in God's hands, love, so do not fret too much."

"When are they going to turn you away?" Laurel asked bitterly.

"Do not feel so badly about it, dear child. In a month."

"Why, daddy!" the girl cried, with a violent burst of tears, "they treat you like a servant, turning you off with a month's notice! How I hate them all! They have taken all you had to give, and now, when you need them, they cast you aside. They are wicked, wicked, and I hope they will all live to repent," and she clung to the good old man with an energy which hurt him, although he would not have admitted it for worlds.

"Hush, dear, remember they are His people," was the gentle reminder, but Laurel could not feel that there was any excuse.

She and her foster-father talked for a long time. She would not let him reproach himself for trying to increase his little hoard, but kissed him whenever the words came to his lips.

"We love each other, daddy, and I think we'll pull through."

"The Lord will find a way for us," he admitted, but Laurel, less unworldly, felt that it must be through her efforts that they be saved from depending upon the charity of others.

She felt that sorrow had surely come to dwell under their roof, but more was in store for her, for before the evening was over the village doctor came to pay a social call and to express his indignation at the action of the church board, and when he left he drew Laurel out on the veranda and told her that he feared the shock of making a change might result very seriously.

"He's not a young man, you see, and if he has to worry any I cannot answer for the consequences," he said decidedly.

Laurel turned from him and crept back into the house. She remembered all this gentle, old clergyman had done for her. As far back as she could remember he had given her of his best and treated her exactly as though she was his daughter in the flesh.

"All that I am or ever will be, I owe to him, bless him, and yet I have to sit still and see him die of worry," she moaned. She knew very well that, untrained as she was, there was little chance for her in the business world. It would take months to fit herself for anything, and in the meanwhile how could they live? Suddenly she stopped, all of the blood rushing to her heart, which beat so rapidly she could not breathe. She knew how she could save him from all trouble; could make his remaining years full of peace and happiness. Yet, her whole being fought against the idea.

"I cannot, I cannot," she whispered "Anything but that," but even as she struggled, she knew that her mind was made up, and she would give a favorable answer to a question Lee Foster had asked her as they glided away from the ball game. He had insisted upon her considering the matter, and she was glad he had, although she felt as though she would die before she could say what he wanted to hear.

"Yet, what is lovelier than sacrifice?" she told herself, as she tossed on her bed that night. "It certainly is more lofty than merely pleasing myself, and besides, I will be doing that which will make father happy. Think of dear old daddy with all the books and magazines he can possibly read! Think of him without anything to bother him, surrounded with comfort and taking his ease. Yes, yes, I will love Mr. Foster if he takes care of my dear, good old father!" and with a pitifully sweet expression on her lovely face, the young girl fell asleep to dream of Kerle and their deep love, as it had appeared to be when he clasped her in his arms under the old apple tree.

She dreamed that Kerle was with her in the garden holding her locket and chain in his hand. The locket was open and within it she saw a picture of some one. In her dream she clung to his arm and begged to be allowed to see it, but he only shook his head and whispered:

"Better not, it will only hurt you!"

She would not listen, however, but caught at it, and eagerly turned the locket so she could see—Myrtle's picture! She awoke with a low cry, only to find herself alone, with the locket and chain lost, Kerle false and herself pledged in her own mind to another.

This very interesting story develops numerous dramatic and thrilling situations as it proceeds. Look out for it next week. If you like the Ledger, and we feel sure you do, we would like to have you send in a subscription and take it regularly. A great many thrilling and unusual stories will appear in it during the coming year. You will find it a weekly treat, hence you had better send in your subscription now. Let us hear from you.

Kowtowing.

The Chinese censor has memorialized the throne on the necessity of abolishing the degrading custom of high native ministers of the crown kowtowing and addressing or replying to their majesties on bended knees. Kowtowing has been a fruitful theme for discussion and controversy ever since the nations of the West first invaded the shores of the great central kingdom. Hitherto the question concerned only those who came from foreign lands on diplomatic or other missions. No one for a moment thought of suggesting that the kowtow was a degrading custom so far as the Chinese officials themselves were concerned. The kowtow before the throne consisted in kneeling three times and touching the ground with the head thrice at each genuflexion.

Western diplomats and others in China have not been in the past unanimous in their opposition to the performance of the kowtow, but the British representatives from the first have consistently refused to submit to it. Lord Macartney, who arrived in China in 1793 as the head of the first British embassy when presenting his credentials would only consent to bend one knee in the presence of the emperor. Over 20 years elapsed before the second British mision arrived in China. The question of the kowtow was again raised, and as a result of his refusal to perform the ceremony Lord Amherst was never officially received by the emperor, who issued an imperial edict to the effect that the English ambassador had not observed the rules of politeness in vogue in the Celestial empire.

The French ambassador sent to China in 1844 received special instructions not to submit to the kowtow. These instructions, however, he ignored, as he held the opinion that ambassadors must conduct themselves according to the usages of the court to which they were accredited. The whole question during the last half century has assumed an altogether different aspect. For over 100 years prior to the establishment of permanent foreign legations in the Chinese capital in 1860 European representatives were not accorded an imperial audience. Since that date the kowtow has never been insisted upon.—North China Herald.

Remarkable Nobleman.

The American father of the heiress greeted the count who was a suitor for her hand with dignified frigidity.

"Sare," said the count, "your daughter has done me ze honnaire of consenting to be my wife. I am called to complete ze negotiations."

"All right," wearily said the father. "How much of a cash settlement do you expect?"

"Nossing, sare."

"What! How much will I have to pay for your poker debts?"

"Nossing sare; I do not gamble."

"How much will I have to put up to settle breach of promise cases brought by chorus girls?"

"Nossing, sare; I do not flirt."

"How much will I have to pay to rebuild your castle?"

"Nossing, sare; it is in fine repair."

"But there must be some expense for me. Out with it.

"No, sare; nossing. I simply love your daughter and she loves me, and we wish to be married. Is not zat enough? Is it not enough to ask you to give me your daughter wizzout your expecting to——"

"Come to my arms!" exclaimed the American father, and tried to fall upon the neck of the delighted count.

But he awoke on the floor, having tumbled from the bed as a finish to his amazing dream.—Judge.

Polite Barber.

"That's a polite barber over there," whispered the man who was waiting his turn.

"In what way?" asked his friend.

"Why, he always bows when he begins shaving you."

"Ah, I see. He bows and scrapes."

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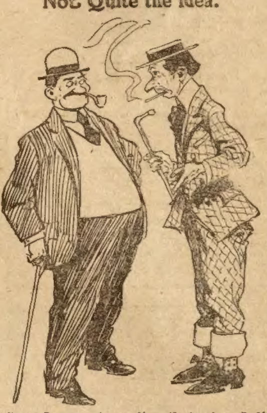

Sam—I mean to so live that when I die all the great cities of the earth will quarrel over the question of my birthplace.

Harold—Yes; each one trying to lay the blame on some other.

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TICKLISH

A Shrewd Husband.

"My wife has been studying geology, and the house is so full of stones that I can't find a place to sit down."

"What will you do about it?"

"I've induced her to take up astronomy."

"Is that any better?"

"Of course; she can't collect specimens."

Law and Philosophy.

Guest—Why don't you have a stop put to that fast driving on your streets?

Hostess—Because the kind of people who indulge in fast driving are just the sort we like to see pass by and get out of sight as quickly as possible.

Recognized Them.

"See those two men? They are partners in crime."

"Looked to me like a song and dance team the moment I set eyes on them."

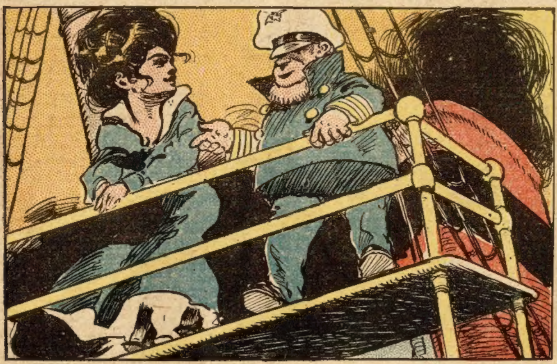
Saved by the Trolley.

Knox—Saw Green and his wife at the opera last night. I can't see where their enjoyment came in, as neither of them know the difference between a symphony and a sonata.

Siox—Well, I ought to be ashamed to confess my ignorance, but I'm in the same boat. By the way, what is the difference?

Knox—Why—er—a—sonata, you know—er—I mean a symphony is—say, there's my car, old man; see you later.

AT SEA.



Miss Landsman—Captain, how do you sailors manage to keep dry?
Cap. Seahoss—Eat somethin' salty, miss.

Without Bias.

A house-hunter getting off a train at a suburban station, said to a boy:

"My lad, I am looking for Mr. Smithson's new block of semidetached cottages. How far are they from here?"

"About twenty minutes' walk," the boy replied.

"Twenty minutes?" exclaimed the house-hunter. "Nonsense! The advertisement says five."

"Well," said the boy, "you can believe me or you can believe the advertisement; but I ain't tryin' to make no sale."

Grand Collection.

"Yes, sah," said the old colonel, "the prohibition law sho' did go into effect down in Georgia, sah."

"That so, colonel?" responded the Chicago friend. "Well, I suppose you had a great number of wire corkscrews left over."

"I did that, sah. I had them by the bushel."

"And did you throw them away, colonel?"

"Oh, no; I stretched them out and made a wire fence and a lightning rod, sah."

Met Their Fate.

As the echo of the clanging bell died away, the man in sombre garb arose to his feet.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"I am," answered his companion in a firm tone, as he, too, stood up.

"Then come. The worst will soon be over."

Closing the door behind them, they descended the stairs and entered the dining room of their boarding house.

One Bit of Evidence.

The young widow was trying to make a favorable impression.

"Don't you think, Mr. Oldbach," she said, "that of late years people are growing more and more intelligent?"

"I do," replied Oldbach. "I notice among other things there has been a great falling off in the number of marriages."

A Hardened Criminal.

Wigg (relating experience with burglar)—The fellow was an amateur all right, for when I pointed my pistol at him he stood petrified with fear.

Wagg—He did? Then you're mistaken about his being an amateur. If he was petrified it's clear that he was a hardened criminal.

Dad Gets Sarcastic.

"Physical culture, father, is perfectly lovely. To develop the arms I grasp this rod by one end and move it slowly from right to left."

"Well, well!" exclaimed her father, "what won't science discover? If that rod had straw at the other end you'd be sweeping.
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Too Modest to Wear It.

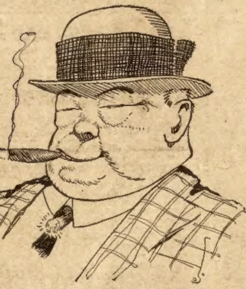
"Real hero, eh?" interrogated the tourist.

"You bet Bill is a hero," drawled the old farmer. "He rescued six head of people and received a Carnegie medal."

"And was he glad when he received it?"

"Yes, but Bill was too modest to wear it so he used it as a fishing sinker."

Men's Styles to Date.



"The merry widower" hat.

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HOUSEHOLD NOVELTY WORKS, Chicago, Ill., or Buffalo, N. Y.

A Blunder Corrected.

"Who can tell me to what kingdom this belongs?" asked a teacher of her class assembled in presence of the inspector. She gingerly held up a filbert. A hand was raised.

"Well, Jane?" said the teacher.

"To the animal kingdom," was the reply. Seeing her teacher's frowning face, Jane that she had blundered.

"Oh, no," she exclaimed in correction—"to the vegetable kingdom! I was thinking of the horse-chestnut'"

Mismated.

Mrs. Wilton—I have not heard from your daughter since she married a foreign count.

Mrs. Bilton—She is very unhappy.

Mrs. W—Too bad; but such matches usually are unfortunate.

Mrs. B.—Indeed they are. You see the poor girl knows so little of foreign languages that she drops back into English every time she gets mad, and then her husband can't understand a word she says.

From Experience.

"Do you believe Poe really heard the raven 'tapping,' tapping, tapping upon his chamber door'?" asked the lanky artist.

"No, that's all rot," responded the impecunious bard.

"Think so?"

"Sure. I'll stake a sonnet against a square meal that instead of a raven doing the tapping it was a bill collector.

Girls' Talk.

Tess—Yes, I accepted Percy Vere last night.

Jess—Did you, really? I'm so glad.

Tess—Are you really? He used to call on you, didn't he?

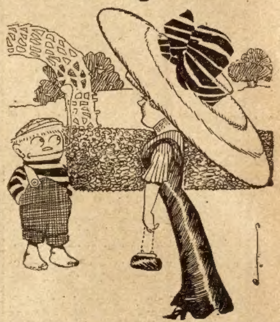
Jess—Yes, and I was beginning to fear I'd have to accept him.

When She Tells it.

Mrs. Homer—Do you mean to say that Mrs. Gabbles doesn't tell the truth?

Mrs. Nextdoor—Not necessarily. She tells it if it is something mean about the neighbors.

Her Big Hat.



Lady—Can you tell me if I can get through this gate to the park?
Boy—I guess so. A load of hay just went through.

The Law Speaks.

First Lawyer—These insurance and railroad grafters should be made to feel the full force of the law.

Second Lawyer—Indeed they must. They have got the community into such a state of terror that the people are afraid to do wrong, and we're likely to starve.

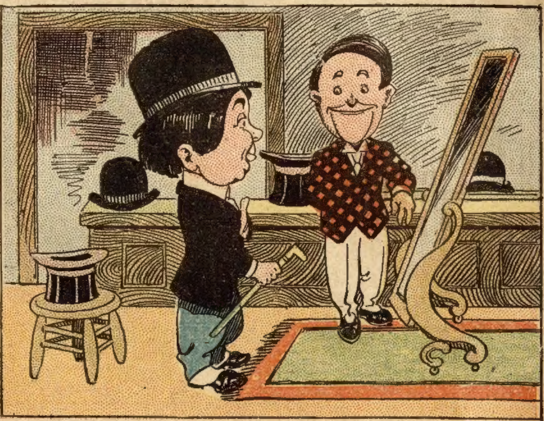
Dusty's Kick.

"Dese automobiles are a nuisance," growled Dusty Dennis, as he frowned at a passing touring car.

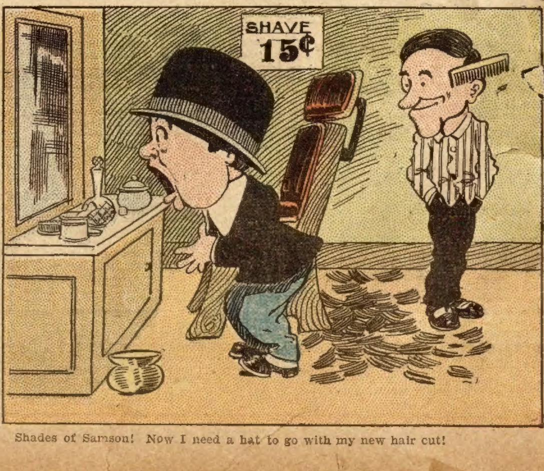
"What's de matter, pard?" asked Gritty George. "One of dem run you down?"

"No, but last night dey put me in a cell wid a chauffeur and I couldn't sleep for de smell of gasoline."

BEFORE AND AFTER.



Chollie—Now I need a hair cut to go with my new hat.



Shades of Samson! Now I need a hat to go with my new hair cut!

TACKLES

Matter of Taste.

"Do you consider it bad taste to pass your plate for the second helping?"

"No, indeed! It is mighty good taste when I am hungry."

Not Quite Clear.

The lady shopper approached the floorwalking gentleman in the department store.

"I want to get a pint of your best enamel," she said.

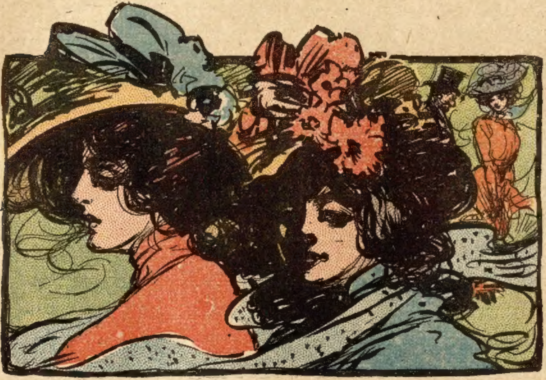
"Yes, madam," rejoined the f. w. g. "Do you want face or stove?"

No Country Theaters.

City Child—Do country towns where you go have theaters?

Actress—No. Country towns never have theaters. They have only opera-houses, academies of music, and temples of Thespis.

SIMILAR BUT DIFFERENT.



Daisy—I guess you are not very much like your mother?

Flossy—Oh, yes, I am. Ma's at home piecing a quilt and I am out making a spread.

No Credit.

"I've the most thankless job on earth," sighed the big man in the front seat of the car.

"Indeed! What is it?" asked the tall man.

"Why, I'm a baseball umpire."

"Shake! I'm in the same boat. I never get any thanks."

"Indeed. Are you a baseball umpire, too?"

"No; I'm running for Vice-President."

A Logical Position.

"So you are in favor of local option?"

"Not local option, sir," rejoined Colonel Stillwell. "Prohibition."

"When did you become a convert to such views?"

"Since I joined the Society for the Prevention of Disagreeable Noises. I have found that there is nothing like a few drinks to tempt men to think that they can sing."

Live Stock.

Mrs. Hardapple (reading)—Hiram, it says here that the navy is going to add live cows to the hospital department.

Mr. Hardapple—Do tell! And I was reading where they were going to add a few more rams. Why, after a bit the navy will look just like a barnyard, begosh.

Mrs. Gadd's Joke.

Mrs. Gabb—What is Mrs. Newwed rushing down the street with that poker for?

Mrs. Gadd—I told her that her husband's son was beating her son.

Mrs. Gabb—But is he?

Mrs. Gadd—No. Her son is beating her husband's son. Won't she rave when she finds out what an exhibition she has made of herself—all for nothing!

A Father's Mean Trick.

Enamored Youth—I beg you, sir, for the hand of your daughter. I cannot live without her.

Old Grumps—Glad to hear it. I can't live with her. Name the day, young man, and have it soon.

Enamored Youth (backing off)—Um—er—please give me time to reflect.

The Reason Why.

Mama (to a friend who is lunching with her)—I don't know why it is, but I always eat more when we have visitors than when we're alone.

Tommy (helping himself to a third piece of cake)—I know why it is. 'Cause we have better things to eat.

An Indication of Learning.

Evelyn—He's a very learned man. You wouldn't think so, would you?

Natica—Oh, yes! I suspected it at once.

Evelyn—Indeed?

Natica—Yes, he makes me so tired.

Restricted by Policy-Holders.

"You'll contribute to the campaign fund, of course?"

"Not this year," replied the insurance magnate. "You see, the only money I have at command now is my own."

Fun for the Village Firemen.

"What do you do in case of fire?"

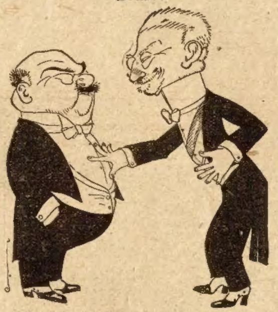
"Call up the village fire department and notify them the house has burned down. They do so enjoy playing on ruins."

The Average All Right.

"I'm afraid," said the minister who was evidently fishing for a word of commendation, "that my sermon this morning was a trifle long."

"Oh, well," rejoined the good deacon, "don't let that worry you. Even if it was a trifle long it wasn't very deep, so it averaged up all right."

Stale.



Count Bluffwitski—But does monsieur not recognize zat we counts come from ze crust of society?

Candid American—Yes, all crust and very little dough.

Discouraging.

Tom—I don't think I'll marry Miss Golding after all.

Jack—But I thought you were quite fond of her?

Tom—Well, I used to be, but I'm getting tired of hearing her say 'no' every time I propose to her.

Poor Man!

Pearl—It was a fashionable June wedding. Three columns were given over to a description of the bride.

Ruby—Gracious! And did the bridegroom attract much attention?

Pearl—A little. He was mentioned as among those present.

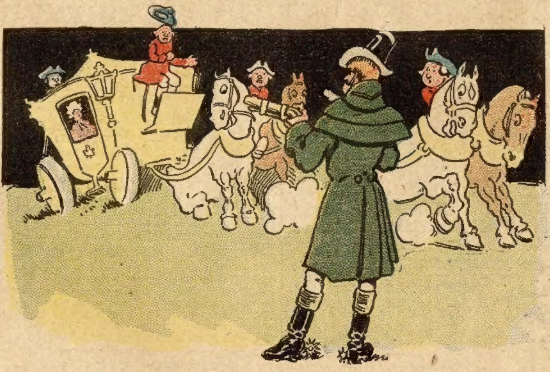
Wonderful.

"Wonderful what ability that fortuneteller seems to possess."

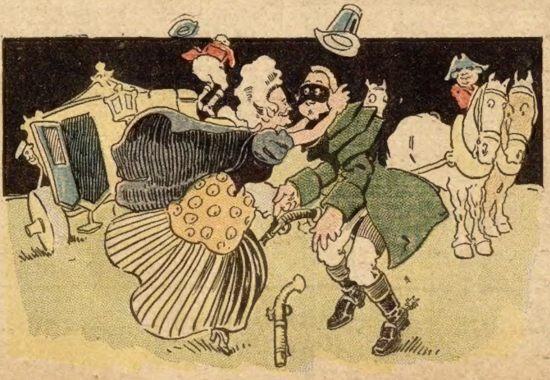
"Her predictions come true?"

"I should say so; she told my wife last night that she'd never be an old maid."

THE KINGS HIGHWAY.



"Your money or your life," he cried, and poked his gun out so.
"Step forth ye merry passengers, I'm sore in need of 'dough.'"



A maiden lady passenger leapt from the stage in glee.
"Oh, take my life; 'tis yours for aye, you're just the man for me."

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MURDERER CURIOUSLY CLEARED

BY LAWRENCE LESLIE.

The career of Abraham Lincoln as a criminal lawyer furnishes more than one instance which might with great propriety be introduced into a collection of the curiosities of criminal jurisprudence. For many years he was leading counsel in almost every noted criminal case in the State of Illinois, and his great eloquence in pleading, his keeness in retort, and searching examination of the witnesses, were famous throughout the West long before either he or his friends began to dream of the Presidency as among the possibilities of his future.

One of his most decided triumphs was won in the case of William D. Armstrong, who was tried at Beardstown, Cass County, Illinois, in 1858, charged with the crime of murder.

In Lincoln's early days, when he was a poor, homeless, almost friendless boy, he formed the acquaintance of a family named Armstrong, consisting of John, his wife, Hannah, and a babe a few months old, to whom Lincoln, by permission, gave the name of William D., in honor of one of his best-loved friends, who had died a few months before.

The Armstrongs were hospitable and kind, almost filling the place of parents to their guest, and he in time grew very fond of the child, which he rocked, carried, petted and fondled, day after day, for weeks and months, while he was waiting for employment.

At length a new life opened to young Lincoln, and he gradually drifted away from this port of generous welcome into the wide, busy world, and for a time his old friends were lost sight of, but never forgotten.

He studied law, became famous as an advocate and a politician, and these humble but warm and tried friends watched with pleasure and pride every step of his progress up the ladder of fame. The babe he had so fondly cared for grew to manhood, and, although a brave, generous youth, the crude pioneer civilization under which he grew up unfortunately developed a love for the excitement of the cup, and a taste for the rougher sports peculiar to the somewhat primitive society in which he was trained.

In the summer of 1857 there was a Methodist camp-meeting in Mason County, attended by not a few of the riotous element, and every night some outrage was committed, which filled the decent portion of the community with indignation. A patrol was organized for the preservation of order, which was one night attacked by the rioters, and a leading citizen named Mitzgar most brutally murdered.

James D. Norris and William D. Armstrong were indicted for the crime. Separate trials were demanded, and Norris was first on the docket. He was speedily convicted and sentenced to a long term in the State penitentiary. The feeling against Armstrong was very bitter, and his counsel was persuaded to take a change of venue to Cass County, and the trial came on at Beardstown in 1858.

Hannah Armstrong, the mother of the accused, was in great distress. Her husband, Jack Armstrong, had been dead for some years. She was oppressed by poverty, deserted by old friends, and now a shameful death or a lingering imprisonment threatened her son. In this emergency she bethought herself of the poor youth to whom she had once given a home, and who had so often played with the boy who now stood in such imminent peril.

For many years Mr. Lincoln had been known as a most successful lawyer, and Mrs. Armstrong became possessed of the idea that if he would but undertake her son's case he would be saved.

She therefore wrote to him at Springfield, begging his assistance. Though pressed by clients on every side, Mr. Lincoln immediately responded that the memories of past kindnesses were yet green, and their obligations sacred, and, Providence permitting, he would undertake the defense of her son, if he didn't try another case that season.

Upon examination he found the case a most desperate one. A jury had already passed upon an alleged accomplice, and rendered a verdict of guilty. The same evidence would have to be confronted in the coming trial, and only by a miracle could a similar result be avoided. The only hope was to blot out the record of the previous trial, refute the senses of witnesses, and cause the jury to forget both their duty and their oaths.

At length the day of trial arrived, and the prosecution brought forward their array of witnesses. As one after another came upon the stand and gave their evidence, they were subjected to a rigid cross-examination, but without any very satisfactory results. The testimony seemed conclusive, and every word fell like the dreaded knell of death.

When the prosecution had finished their case, it appeared that only one witness had directly connected the accused with the crime. He swore that he saw the affray, that Norris pounded the deceased with a club from behind, while Armstrong assailed him in front with a slung-shot, and the doctors testified that the wounds inflicted by either would have produced death. He explained that he was enabled to see so distinctly, owing to the light of the moon, which was nearly at its full, and at the time of the occurrence, eleven o'clock, standing in the heavens about where the sun would be at ten o'clock in the morning.

It occurred to Mr. Lincoln to test the truth of this statement by the almanac. Turning to the clerk, he requested that one be handed him, but it was not readily found. Old almanacs are not generally considered of sufficient value in a court of justice to call for their preservation, so one was not obtained until a messenger had visited a neighboring stationery and book establishment, when the volume was procured and handed to the clerk of the court, with instructions to deliver it to Mr. Lincoln when wanted.

In due time Mr. Lincoln rose to make the closing argument for the defense. It is said by those who listened to the address that the like of it was never before heard by the bar of Beardstown.

He began by describing his early struggles with poverty, how he had been a friendless, homeless wanderer, until the parents of the accused opened to him their door, and henceforth had been to him all that father and mother could ever expect to be. Their generosity had never been forgotten and now that befriended boy stood before them to plead for the life of his benefactors' son—the babe that he had fondled so often in the days of his unquestioned innocence. He drew a touching picture of the widowed mother following with a trembling, bleeding heart every step in the terrible inquisition, bending her ear to every word, and watching with inexpressible anxiety and dread the faces of the jury—now seeing a ray of hope in the softened expression, or despair and death in the cold, hard lines which might sometimes cross the features of the perplexed and patient men who held the issues of life and death, and could send her from that room aimless, hopeless, and childless, or fill to the brim the measure of her joy.

Having warmed up with his exordium, he took up the theory of the prosecution, and with some logic, much sophistry, and unstinted ridicule, he made it appear preposterous, if not impossible.

The testimony was then attacked. Each individual statement analyzed, discrepancies pointed out, and inconsistencies exposed, and the fact clearly brought out that but one witness had sworn to having seen the prisoner commit the assault—at eleven o'clock at night of a certain day, the moon being very bright, nearly at the full, and about as high in the heavens as the sun is at ten o'clock in the morning.

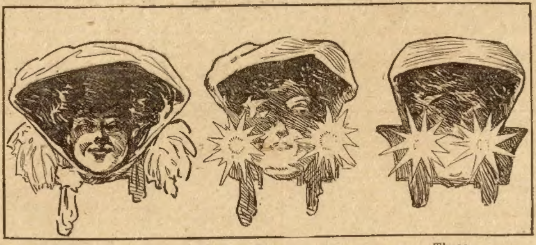
Mr. Lincoln then called upon the clerk for the almanac, opened it, and proceeded to show that on the day and at the hour mentioned there was no moon at all, it having set at nine o'clock—two hours before the affray took place.

The result of this exposure was like the bursting of a bombshell. The masterly eloquence of the plea had already enlisted their sympathies, and the jury had already been seeking some pretext for an acquittal, when this exposure of the boldest perjury filled the court, judg and jury with indignation, demoralized the prosecution, incensed the spectators, and in the tumult and excitement the case was abruptly closed, a verdict of "not guilty" almost instantly rendered, and the prisoner walked out of the dock a free man.

But the most curious part of this story is yet to be told. Some days after the acquittal it was discovered that the almanac which had been given to Mr. Lincoln to read from was not for the year of the murder at all. It was further shown that at the time mentioned by the witness the moon was in substantially the position he described, but the mischief had been done, and the verdict could not be recalled.

How that almanac came to be handed to Mr. Lincoln has never been satisfactorily explained. That it was accidental, there is no doubt, and in the excitement and consternation caused by the speech the exposure, no one thought to call the accuracy of the volume in question until too late.

EVOLUTION OF AN AUTO.



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CURING MARIAN.

BY ALICE PIERCE.

The warm raindrops were softly tapping the pane and the spring landscape, drenched in the downpour of the night which had now given way to a soft drizzle, was dreary and desolate. Marion, in melting mood, decided to be miserable.

It was the first opporuntiy she had had to be miserable in nearly two weeks, for her cousin, Adra, was visiting. In the bustle of entertaining and being entertained there had been no opportunity to weep over the bulky package of love letters that were securely locked in the tin box that contained Marian's most treasured possessions.

Adra had lain down for a nap, her mother, in mackintosh and rubbers, had gone to see a married daughter and Marian was left to the luxury of her misery and a box of chocolates.

Curled up in the big, sleepy-hollow chair in her room she became so absorbed in her letters that she never noticed Adra's silent entrance until a loud boo; caused her to leap from her chair and hurriedly conceal her letters. When she saw that it was her cousin, and not her mother, she was less careful of the letters and Adra's quick eyes detected them.

"Sweetheart?" she demanded, and as Marian's confusion made silent answer, she shook half of the chocolates into the cover of the box and made herself comfortable on the bed.

"Tell me all about him," she demanded. "It's such a horrid day, I can't even sleep. He's handsome, of course?"

"As a Greek god," was the enthusiastic response. "Tall and dark, with such eyes! He's an actor. It's all over now. He had to marry some one his father insisted that he marry. You see, his father is a very wealthy man, and Gordon is his only son.

"He was just acting because he loved the work, but he promised his father to leave the stage and manage the vast estates if he could have one year of his life on the stage. He was going to come back when he left the stage and meet my parents. Until then he did not want to meet them, for fear that the fact that he had been an actor might prejudice them against him.

"Then when he did not leave the stage his horrid father made him marry some girl that had money, and Gordon had to because his father had heart disease and it would kill him to be opposed. He married her a year ago. He has not written since.

"It is so noble of him, because he does not love the girl he married. But he said that it would not be loyal to write the girl that he really did love, and he knew that he couldn't write without telling me how unhappy he was and making it all the harder for both of us to bear."

"And that is why poor Ben Bronson sighs in vain?" demanded Adra. "Ben's a splendid fellow."

"He's a dear," assented Marian. "If it had not been for Gordon perhaps—but what's the use?" she broke off despairingly. "Ben is too good to be tied to a girl whose heart is dead. I should always be grieving for Gordon, and it would make Ben positively miserable to see me always crying."

"Is Gordon worth it?" asked Adra practically. "I thought that I was in love with an actor once, but I found out that he was just a flirt. He liked to get letters from girls and show them to the rest of the company to prove what an irrestible chap he was. If his name was not different I should believe him to be the same fellow."

"Gordon is different," said Marian proudly. "Only a great love could express itself as his did. Listen:"

Marion took up the letter she had thrust into the pack when she had heard Adra come in and began to read. It was a high-flown farewell, copied from some play apparently.

The sentiment was lofty, but the expression was clumsy, though it seemed beautiful enough to an 18-year-old girl already infatuated with the stage and its people. When she had finished she looked up to Adra for her approval and her eyes snapped as she saw that the girl was rocking on the bed in an ecstacy of merriment.

"He must have manifolded those letters," cried Adra, when her laughter had subsided. "That was just the way he bade farewell to me. Did you get one where he told how, after his interview with his father, he went into the art gallery and how every one of the old family portraits seemed to bear your face?"

Marian nodded a startled assent and Adra went on.

"My dear girl," she said earnestly. "We were both taken in by the same man and by the same letters. He must have a regular set of forms that he copies off, since he seems to lack inventiveness.

"You know that Billy Selover, Bob's old chum, is running an opera house somewhere or other and your 'Gordon' or my 'Alfred' was showing him one of my letters. Mr. Selover took my letters away from him and sent them to my brother. Bob was an angel about it and brought them to me instead of taking them to mother, but it cured me.

"Mr. Selover told all about our hero. His real name is Brannigan and he used to be property boy in a theater. His father is a plasterer and his mother takes in washing. The rest of the company all hate him for his foolishness, and they were only too glad to tell Mr. Selover all they knew about him when they found out that he knew one of Brannigan's correspondents."

Marian tumbled the letters into the open fireplace and touched a match to them.

"I wish I could get my letters back," she said slowly.

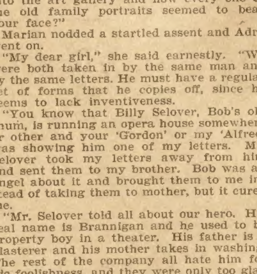
"Mr. Selover took all the letters away from the man to make certain that he got all of mine," said Adra comfortingly. "If he wrote you that he was married a year ago I guess that Billy—Mr. Selover—got yours, too."

"Billy!" Marian's voice was teasing, and Adra's cheeks grew softly pink.

"It's not to be announced until fall," she exclaimed in confusion. "Let's go and telephone Ben Bronson to come over tonight. It's too wet to go anywhere, but we can make fudge."

"Let's," assented Marian eagerly, and Adra smiled as she realized that another cure was complete.

Asking Too Much.



Traveling Man—My good man, what time does this train leave Swamp Center?

Agent—My friend, I'm only the agent, I'm not a fortune teller.

◆

It's hard for a woman with a double chin to convince people that she is romantic.

PICKLED PEPPERS

A Winning Speech.

She was white with indignation.

"You shall never go down to that horrid club again, James Henry."

"But Martha——"

"Never mind. You heard what I said You must remember when I bring my foot down on anything it bears weight."

"Nonsense!"

"What! You mean to ridicule my assertion, James Henry Butler?"

"Oh, no, my dear. I merely wished to remark that a foot as small as the one you possess could not possibly bear weight."

There was a long pause.

"You really think so, James? Well, now, aren't you both clever and truthful! I believe I will let you go down to the club tonight if you promise to come home real early.

■

An Unapproachable Horse.

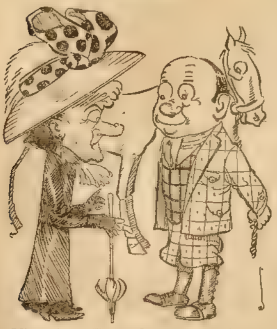
An Erie young man called to take his sweetheart out driving the other day, but when the stunningly attired young lady caught sight of the turnout the young man had hired for the occasion she feigned a headache and refused to accompany him.

"Why, Violet," asked the astonished mother, "why don't you go with him?"

"Well, mama," was the indignant reply, "I consider that a very foolish question on your part. How could I go when the horse he was driving didn't match a single thing I had to wear?"

❧

Precaution.



Miss Ann Teek—He's a good-looking horse, but is he easily frightened?

Dealer No, mum; but perhaps you'd better not get around in front of him

■

His Temperature.

It was not in his public address that Senator Beveridge related this story, but at an informal gathering of congenial spirits. "When I was a boy in Adams County," he said, "Judge Blank was taken very ill. The doctor called regularly; but the judge kept getting worse. Finally the crisis came. The morning after the doctor called at the judge's house. 'I hope your master's temperature is lower than it was last evening,' said he to the butler.

" 'I'm not so sure about that,' replied the man; 'he died, sir, in the night.' "

❧

The Bore Retorts.

Midnight came and still the bore remained.

"Do you like music?" asked the beautiful girl, just to break the monotony.

"Passionately fond of it," replied the bore. "In fact, music will always carry me away."

She rushed over to the piano and played several popular airs.

"You are still here," she said, turning on the stool.

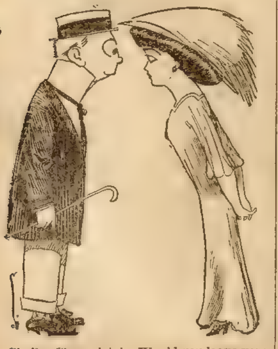
"Yes," yawned the bore.

"But I thought you said music always carried you away?"

"So I did—music!"

❧

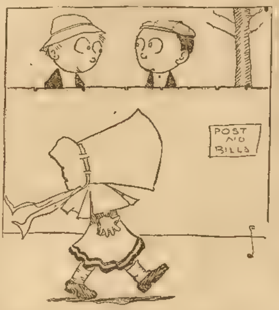
Bad for Cholly.



Cholly Chumpleigh—Would you leave your happy home for me?

Miss Caustique—Yes, if I saw you coming and the back door wasn't locked.

Society.



First Kid Yes, Edwin, I'd introduce you to her, but, you see, she's particular.

Second Kid—Gee! How'd you ever meet her?

❧

Ready for Him.

The dignified president of a well-known and flourishing New England college, in his moments of relaxation, tells the following story at his own expense:

One summer some years ago he spent a vacation of several weeks at a farm-house in a Maine town. The next season he received a letter from his former boarding mistress, inquiring if he would like to return.

In reply he stated that he would be very glad to pass another summer vacation with her, provided some needed changes were made about the place.

"First," wrote the college president, "your maid Mary is persona non grata, being anything but neat and orderly in her ways, and if she is still with you, I trust you will at least not allow her to wait on the table.

"Secondly, I would suggest that the sanitary conditions on your place would be greatly improved if the pigsty were moved back a few rods farther from the house or done away with altogether.

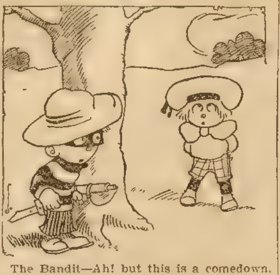
"I will wait until I hear from you before deciding about coming."

The somewhat particular college president was reassured by the receipt of the following reply.

"Mary has went. We hain't had no hogs on the place since you was here last summer Be sure and come."—Judge.

❧

Footpadding.



The Bandit—Ah! but this is a comedown. Boldheart, the boy bandit, to descend to holdin' up sissy boys fer a cent's worth of gum drops.

❧

His Uncertain Birthplace.

Senator Gore of Oklahoma, in illustration of one of his points in his speech in Faneuil hall told a story of the James family of Jamestown, Va., who since the foundation of that historic city have been accustomed to have all births and deaths in the James family recorded in the city register.

A few years ago Thomas James got married, and, after a honeymoon of eighteen months abroad, returned home with little Jimmie James as one of the most valuable acquisitions of their foreign trip.

As was the long-standing custom of the family, the proud parents wanted Jimmie's birth recorded in the city registry, but the city clerk politely informed them that it would be impossible to oblige them, since the child was born not only out of the city, but in another land.

After much exhortation and influence brought to bear, the official, however, promised to do the best he could, and wrote the following in the registry: Jimmie James, born Feb. 28, 1905, during the temporary absence of his parents.'

❧

His Narrow Escape.

"Once," related the tall tragedian with the Shakespearean hair, "I was stranded in the wilds of Georgia. Night came and still I had sighted no help. Suddenly I found myself surrounded by a drove of razor-back hogs. Ah, gentlemen, when morning came ——"

"Hold on," interrupted the fat comedian, "don't spring any such yarns as that on the innocent. Razor-back hogs are known be exceedingly vicious and if you had been surrounded by a drove of them you would have never seen morning. They would have eaten you up, even to the pawn ticket for your watch."

The tall tragedian scratched his chin in deep meditation.

"No, me lord, you are wrong," he said finally. "There are exceptions in all cases You see, these happened to be safety razor-back hogs."

❧

Polk Miller's Story.

Polk Miller of Richmond blew into the editorial office of the Almanack like a fresh breeze from the south a few days ago and was promptly asked, of course, for the latest dusky story in Virginia He said it was about substituting a wild turkey for a tame turkey. One of his friends bought a turkey from old Uncle Ephraim and asked him, in making the purchase, if it was a tame turkey.

"O, yais, sir, it's a tame tu'key ol right."

"Now, Ephraim, are you sure it's a tame turkey?"

"O, yais, sir, dere's no so't o' doubt 'bout dat. It's a tame tu'key ol right."

He consequently bought the turkey, and a day or two later when eating it he came across several shot. Later on when he met old Ephraim, on the street he said: "Well, Ephraim, you told me that was a tame turkey, but I found some shot in it when I was eating it."

"O, dat war a tame tu'key ol right," was Uncle Ephraim's reiterated rejoinder, "but de fac' is, boss, Ise gwine to tell yer in confidence dat dem ere shot was intended for me."

■

Perfectly Truthful.

Said He—If I were to ask you your age would you give me a truthful answer?

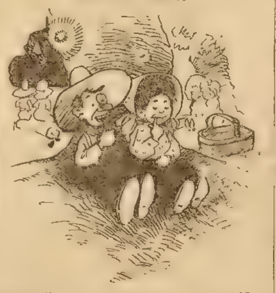
Said She—Indeed I would.

Said He—Well, how old are you?

Said She—None of your business.

❧

Sweet Pain.



Emmeline—I—I never loved afore. How ort it to feel, Samuel?

Samuel—It orter feel like that there comfortable uncomfortableness 'at ye hev arter Sunday dinner.

❧

Out of the Mouths of Babes.

Little Nellie, pointing to a flock of chattering sparrows, remarked:

"Look, mamma! I guess they're having a sewing society meeting"

"Elmer," said the teacher to a small pupil, "what is the chief use of bread?"

"To spread butter and jam on," was the prompt reply.

"Mamma," said little Elsie, "I wish you would make baby behave"

"What's he doing," asked the mother.

"Every time I pull his hair he cries."

Little Tommy had been watching a man putting fly screens in the windows and running to his grandmother he said:

"Grandma, are you going to get the man to put screens on your spectacles?"

Little Mabel was very much disappointed because she was unable to find her name in the Bible.

"Oh, well," she said a last, "I'll be such a good girl that God will put my name in the next Bible he prints."

■

Broke Away.

One day a tall, gaunt woman, with rope-colored hair and an expression of great fierceness, strode into the office of a county clerk in West Virginia.

"You are the person that keeps the marriage-books ain't ye?" she demanded.

"What book do you wish to see, madam?" asked the polite clerk.

"Kin you find out if Jim Jones was married?"

Search of the records disclosed the name of James Jones, for whose marriage a license had been issued two years before.

"Married Elizabeth Mott, didn't he?" asked the woman.

"The license was issued for a marriage with Miss Elizabeth Mott."

"Well, young man, I'm Elizabeth. I thought I oughter come in an' tell ye that Jim has escaped!"

❧

South American Warfare.

The battle was going aginst him. The commander-in-chief, himself ruler of the South American republic, sent an aide to the rear, ordering Gen. Blanco to bring up his regiment at once. Ten minutes passed, but it didn't come. Twenty, thirty, an hour—still no regiment. The aide came tearing back hatless, breathless.

"My regiment! My regiment! Where is it? Where is it?" shrieked the commander.

"General," answered the excited aide, "Blanco started it all right, but there are a couple of Americans down the road, and they won't let it go by."

❧

Drastic Measures.

Springtime Bard—Ah, Miss Rose, what should a young man do when he is keyed up to write spring poetry?"

Heartless Maid—He should be locked up.

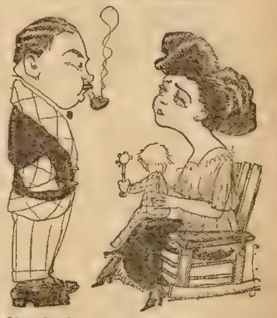
HIS LUMINOUS VIEWS.

The statesman leans back in his chair,
  Looks out across the park,
And, weighing every word with care,
  Delivers this remark:
"The tariff is a meaty nut;
  I think it should be altered, but—

The statesman fumbles with his pen,
  Debating means and ways,
Looks out across the park again
  And sapiently says:
"The ship of state is not a skiff;
  The tariff will be altered if——"

❧

From His Standpoint.



Mrs. Benham—Baby looks more like me every day.

Benham—Yes, I'm afraid baby is growing too fast.

❧

Looking Ahead.

"Now that I have provided you with a good dinner," said the kind lady, "will you saw some wood for me?"

"Madam," replied the hobo from Boston, "nothing would afford me more pleasure than to abbreviate timber for you, but in behalf of posterity I am compelled to decline."

"But what has posterity got to do with it?" queried the k. l.

"It's like this, madam," explained the self-conducted tourist. "With the revolutions of the whirligig of time my grandchildren may become multimillionaires, and if their daughters have occasion to purchase titles it will be much more pleasant for them to be able to say that their great-grandfather was a gentleman of leisure instead of a common wood sawyer."

❧

An Ugly Man's Son.

Two Irishmen who had not met for many years came together one day recently. After much slapping of backs and rejoicing, one said:

"Long time since we met, Clancy, isn't it? Lots of things have happened since then."

"'Tis, indeed. Look at myself. Shure, it's married I am," replied the other.

"You don't tell me. Have you any family? asked the first speaker.

"Faith, and I have that. I've a fine, healthy boy, and the neighbors say he's the picture of me."

The first speaker looked at Clancy, who was not built on the lines of prize beauty, and said: "Ah, well, what's the har-um, so long as the child is healthy?"

❧

Touching Forbearance.

Hawkins—There was an amusing affair in connection with Green's dog the other day

Dawkins—Do tell me about it.

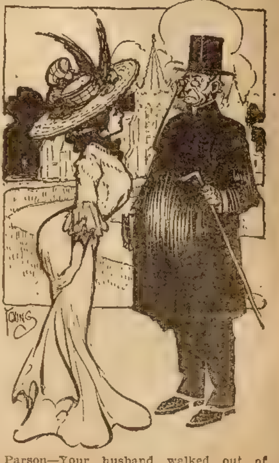
Hawkins—Why, the animal took a violent dislike to the chief magistrate, and bit him.

Dawkins—I suppose he immediately made an order for its destruction?

Hawkins—Oh, no; he merely bound it over to keep the piece (peace).

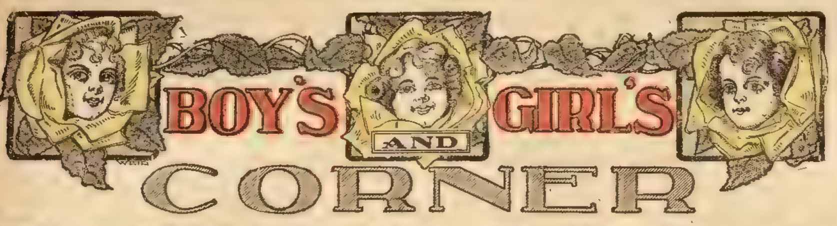
❧

Making It Worse.



Parson—Your husband walked out of church in the middle of my sermon. Really, I——

Lady—Oh, you mustn't mind him, he walks in his sleep.



The Smuggler of St. Croix

A Tale of the Northeast Border

By J. M. MERRILL

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CHAPTER I.

A STRANGER IN CAMP.

THERE was a jingle of bells on the frosty air.

Emil Stacy was nearing the camp on Ripple Creek where he and two boy friends were trapping for the fur market down at St. Stephens. The Blue Noses were a kindly, hospitable people, and Emil thought them jolly good fellows, despite the fact that he was the son of a Maine Yankee, who had imbibed a certain amount of hatred of Great Britain from his ancestors of Revolutionary days.

Emil's father had been dead for two years. The boy lived with an aunt in Calais, and attended the village school when not obliged to work to supply the home larder.

It had proved uphill work for the boy of sixteen. He often performed a full man's work without receiving a man's pay. Early in the fall he had induced his aunt to allow him to go to the New Brunswick woods on a trapping expedition. The Calais aunt had company for the winter and very willingly granted the boy's request, since Emil had satisfied her that he could make more money in the woods than doing odd jobs about the village streets.

A stiff breeze had sprung up since the boy had set out on his return from St. Stephens. The sleighing was none of the best; the pony drooped his head and seemed tired ere half the journey to the trappers' camp was passed. The pung in which the boy sat was a substantial affair, and creaked under its load of provisions which Emil had purchased in town against the deepening of the snows of an expected hard winter, which old Pocomone, an Indian hunter, had promised as sure to come immediately after Christmas.

"Get up, Bug; what you lagging for?" cried Emil sharply. And then he plied his whip to the pony's sleek back.

A fierce gust of wind sent a swirl of snow from the tall trees at the roadside. Some of the particles penetrated the boy's neck-covering, sending a chill down his back.

Behind the boy flowed the boisterous St. Croix. This formed the boundary line between Britain's soil and Yankeedom. Emil and his chums were taking advantage of the excellent trapping along New Brunswick creeks to intrude on the domain of the foreigner.

The big lumbering stream was as yet unfettered by ice.

There had been stirring scenes enacted on the lower St. Croix, and the boy campers felt impressed that they themselves might meet with some adventures of an exciting nature before the season was over.

The pony made a spurt and dashed down an incline, between two high hills. A gust of wind swept through the place, which seemed to form a tunnel for collecting the gale and compressing it into a narrow space, thus serving to give the force and velocity of a small cyclone to the caged winds.

A tree seemed to crash not far distant. Following this, amidst a blinding cloud of feathery snow, fell and rolled an object down the precipitous side of the nearest hill. This object rolled across the track, causing Bug to rear backward with a violent snort.

"Jee Whitaker! now what?" ejaculated Emil, drawing rein.

Bug refused absolutely to proceed. Twisting the reins about the dashboard the boy trapper sprang to the ground and proceeded to investigate.

He was not long in making out a bruised and bleeding human form—a man, and quite unconscious.

Emil was startled and considerably interested. Who and what was the man? He was clad in a business suit of tweed, and his face was that of a person of more than ordinary intelligence. Bug stood quiet while his master examined the poor unfortunate. The wind had perhaps flung a decayed limb upon the man as he tramped through the forest.

There was but one course to pursue. Emil lifted the insensible man and placed him in the pung, after which he resumed his seat and drove on his way. Presently he turned down an old logging trail and was soon nearing the bank of Ripple Creek.

A shout greeted boy and pung as Emil drove into a small clearing. Two boys plunged from out a cabin door and stood staring at their chum's unusual freight.

"A man and as dead as a mackerel!" exclaimed Seth Pintler, the youngest of the trio and employed as shanty cook, he having been housemaid for a mother who preferred her boy's work to that of the ordinary Biddy.

"Who is he, Emil?" questioned Dick Longmore, whose tall, thin figure was so attenuated as to scarcely make a shadow on a sunshiny day.

"I can't tell you," was Emil's rejoinder. He then gave an account of his finding the stranger.

"This is blamed bad, you know," declared the tall boy, who had been dubbed "Slab" by his mates.

"Well, yes, bad enough for the man," agreed Emil.

"I meant bad for us," quickly uttered Slab. "As for the man, he is a stranger, anyhow, a Blue Nose of course, and—well, I should feel better if you hadn't picked him up, Emil. Why did you do it?"

"That's a mighty nice question to ask," blurted little Seth. "If Emil hadn't fetched him he'd have been a heathen sure enough. The poor man isn't dead. His pulse beats, for I felt it. Fetch him in by the fire, Emil, and we'll try and fetch him to."

Emil was out of the pung now. At his request Slab assisted in taking the man from the vehicle. They bore him between them to the house and to shakedown of cedar boughs in one corner of the room.

The log building had been erected by former trappers and was of considerable dimensions, having two rooms and a loft, beside which there was a small dugout or cellar under the floor of the rear room. A very comfortable house for the winter the boys thought.

Seth rewooded the fire, which blazed hotly, making the sheet-iron stove a cherry red. Soon there was water boiling in the teakettle. From this the small lad manufactured a strong tea of herbs, while his two companions worked over the unfortunate man, trying in every conceivable way to rouse him from his stupor.

This, however, they were unable to do till a late hour in the day.

The man opened his eyes after a time, yet he seemed dazed and unable to explain matters.

Emil and Slab went to look at the traps that night, while Seth remained to look after their injured guest and prepare supper. When the two returned bearing two mink, over which they were secretly rejoicing, they found their involuntary visitor sitting up and talking with their young cook.

"Look here, Emil," cried Seth as the two boys blustered in, "can you take another trip tonight?"

"I'd rather not," said Emil. "What's the trouble, anyhow?" The speaker regarded the flushed and excited face of Seth inquiringly.

"Nothing the trouble only Mr. Smith here wants to get home powerful bad, and he lives on the t'other side of the river. If you could take him to the river at the Indian village he'd get one of them to ferry him across."

"Well, what's the matter of his stopping with us till morning?" asked sturdy Emil, approaching as he flung down his catch. "Blame me if I care to drive out again tonight. The weather is something fierce."

"It need not matter," said the man in a low, tremulous tone. "I will endeavor to go by myself. You have been very kind, boys."

Emil regarded the speaker thoughtfully. His name was Smith, a very ordinary cognomen, indeed, and yet the owner of it was not a commonplace man. He carried his head high, and his eyes, deep set and piercing, were filled with the fires of a strong brain.

"Do you think you are well enough to go on?" queried Emil.

"I am much stronger, said Mr. Smith. "This boy here," indicating Seth, "has furnished me with the best meal I have had in a long day. I only wish I had him up the St. Croix in one of the camps. He could earn good wages there, cooking in a shanty."

"And I'd like the work," said little Seth, his eyes shining.

"Suppose you go, then?" suggested Emil.

"I reckon he can't," broke in Slab Longman. "He's got to stay with us, you know that as well as I do, Emil Stacy."

"I know he doesn't have to stay if he can do better," returned Emil. "He won't get rich here, that's one sure thing. We can get along some way. Are you a lumberman, Mr. Smith?"

"Humph! I did not say that."

"No, but I believe you are," broke forth Emil. "I don't think you are a Blue Nose, either."

The man did not reply. His head was suddenly craned sidewise, and a light as of alarm gleamed in his deep-set eyes. He half rose to his feet as he listened. A sound came down the road on the wings of the wind—the creak and rasping sound of runners on frozen snow.

"Some one is coming," said Slab.

The boys all turned toward the door. Emil advanced after a moment. A rig had halted without and now some one rapped sharply on the outside door.

Emil quickly opened the door, admitting a gust of wind that extinguished the light.

CHAPTER II.

BAFFLED OFFICIALS.

"Hello!" called a voice from the darkness. "Who lives here, anyhow?"

"We do," said Emil meekly.

"Who in satan is we?" growled a harsh voice. "Boys, eh? Well, it doesn't matter; boys are sometimes worse than men. Strike a light and let's see what sort of a ranch this is."

The three boys were now glancing through the open door. What they saw under the cloud of starlit night, was a sleigh holding three men—the one at the door, making the fourth. Evidently they had lost their way and were seeking either shelter or instructions how to get back to the main road.

"You are off your beat I see," said Emil. "This is simply a trappers' cabin. The main traveled road is a mile to the east. You have come—"

"I know where we are, so don't waste your breath, youngster," growled the man. "You've got a visitor, and he is the chap we're after. Old Pocomone told us all about it."

"Pocomone, the halfbreed!" exclaimed Emil. "Well, what did he tell you?"

"He said our man was here. Strike a light and fetch the rascal out."

The three boys were not quite pleased at the brusqueness of this man, whose accents bespoke him a member of the British nationality. Instantly Emil surmised something. He was not disposed to acquiesce in the demands of the stranger. Soft words win, harsh ones are apt to alienate friendship and breed distrust.

"Let him in, Emil. You light the lamp, Seth," said Slab. "It's getting thunderin' cold with the door open. Come in, old man, and we'll see."

"One moment."

Emil grasped the arm of the thin boy and drew him toward him. "Don't be too fast, Slab," he whispered. "There's a nigger in the fence somewhere and we musn't be too precipitous." Turning to the visitor: "Who is this chap you are looking for? I'd like to know something about him before I make any move."

"You would, eh?" sneered the other. "Boys shouldn't be so particular. I don't mind telling you, however, that the man we seek is a blamed Yankee smuggler, who has impudently defied the laws of Great Britain. Give him up at once or you may get into trouble."

The lads continued to block the door. The officer of the crown, for such he seemed to be, pushed his way into the room, crowding Emil aside.

There was something portentous in the man's remark. Emil remembered hearing some one speak of the seizure of some goods that had been smuggled from the American side for the purpose of supplying an up-river lumber camp. The boy trapper thought of this almost instantly. The man he had rescued from death at the roadside might be connected in some way with this affair.

Emil was not a law-breaker, yet his sympathies somehow went with his own people in an affair of this kind.

"Say, hold on a moment," cried Emil trying to push the intruder backward. "Don't be too fast. If anything is wrong, and we are to blame we'll make it right, see?"

At this moment a light flashed into the room. The intruder had moved the slide of a dark lantern. He swept the glare about the little room. Every nook and corner came under the man's keen observation. Emil started, glancing [illegible] at the cot of boughs. One glance caused him to compress his lips to keep back a surprised ejaculation—Smith was gone.

"Hello! where is Smith?"

This cry fell from the lips of Slab Longmore. Emil bit his finger to keep down his wrath. It was toward the lean lad his anger boiled. Slab was always blundering.

"Yes, where is Smith?" demanded the officer. "He is the man we are after. Of course that's not his name, but it does well enough in a time like this. He is a stoutish fellow, with keen eyes and sandy hair."

"Yes, that's him," said Slab.

"Shut your head, Lengthy," broke in little Seth, striking the tall boy not lightly across the shoulders. "We're no hunters of men for the Britishers, let me tell you that."

Emil thanked Seth for his just indignation. That is he did so in his heart, not aloud.

"Give up the villain, boys. You conceal a criminal at your peril."

The speaker whistled sharply. Two of the men in the sleigh appeared at the door.

"Watch the house, men; the chap we are after is inside, and he must not be permitted to escape."

The two turned and walked, one to a narrow side window, the other to the rear of the little forest cabin. Had the man they sought been unhurt this precaution would have come too late, since Smith had had ample time, during the colloquy at the door, to have made his escape by the back way. As it was Emil feared the poor fellow was still in the house, in the back room, where he had doubtless dragged himself when he heard the voice of the searchers.

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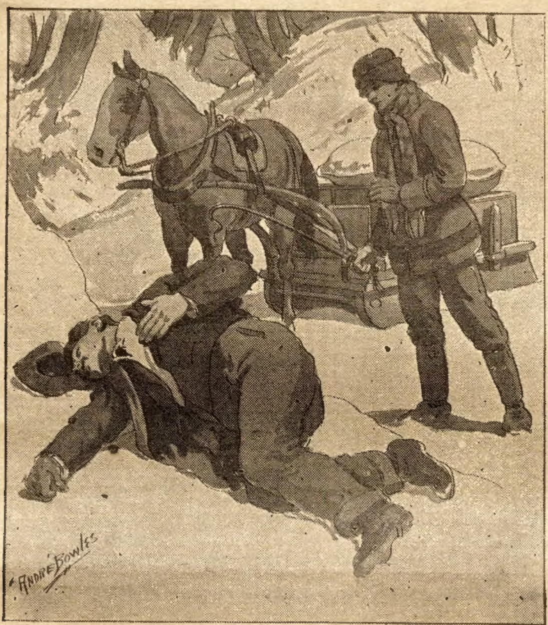
Having satisfied himself that his man was not in the front room, and espying another door, the officer sprang to this and flung it open. He crossed the threshold and glared about the small, low kitchen. Emil's heart was in his mouth. He was pleased when the searcher began to swear. Not that Emil was a lover of profanity, far from it, only by this token he understood that Smith, the fugitive, was still at large and doubtless now quite beyond the clutch of the British lion.

By this time Slab had lit the lamp and shut the front door to keep out the blustering wind and snow. The officer turned into the front room, facing Emil and Seth. His face was scowling and wrathful.

"Now, what does this mean?" he demanded.

"What does what mean?" innocently queried Emil.

"The secreting of Isaac Wentler from His Majesty's officers. He is a criminal in the sight of our laws, and he who aids the man in any manner is accessory after the fact. Do you understand that, boys?" demanded the official with much dignity.



A bruised and bleeding human form---a man.

"It's clear as mud to me," said Seth, grinning. The small chap could afford to grin now that Smith had escaped. Slab grew pale, and seemed anxious to square himself with outraged law, while Emil started and muttered something under his breath. So this man calling himself Smith was Isaac Wentler, the Calais lumberman. It was a startling bit of news.

"I think I shall have to take you boys into custody," proceeded the haughty official, whose chagrin at the escape of his man was deep and abiding.

"Oh, Lord! don't do that," pleaded Slab. "We hain't done nothing. My, if I'd only known Smith was an outlaw I'd insisted on giving him up instanter."

"I don't think," put in Emil, "that Smith is the man you seek. I know of Isaac Wentler as an honorable business man of Calais, and am sure he would not be found doing anything wrong. Mr. Smith seemed honest, too. You can't possibly have any clew on us, sir. We simply gave shelter to a poor fellow who got hurt in the woods."

"Poor fellow indeed!" snarled the officer. "I tell you he is Isaac Wentler, the smuggler of Yankee goods into His Majesty's dominions, and we are bound to capture him and send him to Botany Bay. Can you understand that, boys?" The speaker strode up and down the floor with angry fierceness. "You will produce the villain at once or take the consequences." At last the irate official turned upon Emil.

"We'll have to take the consequences of course," agreed Emil, white about the lips, yet outwardly calm. His Revolutionary blood was boiling beneath the calm exterior nevertheless. "It is as I tell you, we simply befriended a man who was hurt by a falling limb. We did not know then, nor for that matter, do we know now that he is this Isaac Wentler whom you seek. In any event, we have done nothing wrong. If you choose to arrest us our dear old Uncle Sam will have something to say, you can bet on that."

"Uncle Sam. Who is he?"

"Why, who but the United States of America, the greatest nation the sun shines on!" exclaimed Emil loftily.

"The deuce you say!"

His Majesty's officer recoiled.

"I do say it——"

"Then you are from the other side—Yankee boys?"

"That's what we are, Mr. Officer."

"And here's our colors," cried interested Seth, opening his jacket and flaunting a small silk flag in the face of the British officer.

"You young scalawags," growled the man.

He made no attempt to interfere further, however, but turned on his heel and quitted the room. He, with his companions, made a thorough search of the vicinity without results, after which, with a warning to the boys not to harbor the hiding smuggler, the party drove away.

"By George!" exclaimed Emil, "that was a close call for our man Smith. I wouldn't have given him up though, if I had known he was Isaac Wentler instead of plain John Smith."

CHAPTER III.

A COUNCIL AND A SURPRISE.

"You'd be a blamed fool if you didn't," said Slab.

"Why would I?" asked Emil, flashing a displeased look at the tall boy.

"Because Isaac Wentler is an outlaw, that's why," retorted the indignant Slab. "I don't think I should lay myself out to defend a man like that."

"But he is a Yankee, and——"

"Being a Yankee doesn't cut any figure," broke in Slab, still indignant. "I've been to Sunday school long enough to know right from wrong, anyhow."

"Oh, have you?' sneered Emil, his own cheeks burning. "I don't call it criminal doing what Mr. Wentler did. The goods he was hauling were bought with his own money, and he was taking them to a logging camp of his own as well. Now it seems to me a dirty mean caper for the British government to jump onto a man for that. They've taken his goods, confiscated them as I have heard. Seems to me that ought to satisfy even British law."

"It doesn't make a mite of difference," said Slab, "law is law. If you break it you must suffer, that's my way of thinking."

"And mine too," said little Seth, much to the surprise of Emil.

"Good for you, Seth!" exclaimed Slab, delighted to find himself not alone in opinion. "I guess Emil will learn that it is just as wrong for an American to break a British law as it is for a Blue Nose to fracture an American one. I go in for fair play every time."

Emil walked aside and stood sulking by himself. Their trapping work was forgotten for the time, and the Calais lad nursed his wrath against the British for a silent ten minutes. At the end of this time he approached his chums with a smile upon his face.

"Never mind," he said pleasantly, "I am not going to spoil our fun because of this trouble. We didn't do anything wrong, that is, not intentionally. I am glad, though, that Wentler escaped."

"On the whole, I think it is better so," acquiesced Seth.

"I don't agree with you, boys," announced lanky Dick Longmore. "I think a man who breaks a law ought to be punished."

"But a British law is different."

"No it isn't. Law is law, and he who breaks it ought to be punished. I hope they'll catch Isaac Wentler."

"You are a queer guy, Dick," said Emil, refusing to give way to his anger a second time. "One would think you were a Blue Nose instead of a Maine boy. I don't think ——"

"What was that?"

This break in of Seth's was caused by the clatter of rubbish from the old stick chimney which had not been used of late for fire, it being a relic of the builder who had doubtless no stove fuel with which to convey the smoke skyward.

Something's up the old chimney!" exclaimed Emil, seizing his rifle, which hung on wooden hooks against the wall. "It may be a bear."

Cautiously the boy approached the corner where the stick chimney leaned crookedly against the log wall. Before he reached it an object dropped to the ground and crawled into the room.

"Mr. Smith, by all that's glorious!" exclaimed Emil recoiling.

"It is I all right enough, lads," said the man laughing. "I tell you I felt mighty uncomfortable up there at one time. I had a close call indeed.

The beaming smile changed to a serious expression as the speaker laid a hand on the shoulder of Emil.

"You are Mr. Wentler?" said Emil abruptly.

"I will not deny it, my lad. You stood by me like a man when those Britishers were seeking my life. I thank you for it, and hope to prove to you and your friends that I am really not the rascal that fellow tried to paint me."

"I don't believe you are a criminal," said Emil gently.

"I do not think I am. Since you have befriended me it is no more than right for me to tell you all about the trouble which has placed my liberty, perhaps my life, in jeopardy." Wentler sat wearily down on a stool, crossed his legs and coughed reflectively. Seth and Slab drew near, each anxious to hear what the gentleman had to tell.

"I have a logging job near the Riffles on this side the river. There is no way of crossing the river up there, so I simply loaded a couple of wagons with tools and provisions and drove across the bridge at St. Stephens and set out to drive to camp. This has been done by others and nobody thought anything of it. I did not really mean to break any law. These customs duties are onerous and unjust anyhow. Well, to make a long story short, the British officials took it upon themselves to pounce upon my goods and confiscate them. One of the teamsters was captured, but the second one and myself escaped in the darkness.

"So you lost everything?" queried Seth.

"Yes, everything, and it promises to ruin me."

"Why didn't you buy your stuff on this side?" asked practical Slab, "then you wouldn't have had any trouble."

"That is perhaps true but I had no money to buy with, not now at least. The goods came from my brother's store in Calais, and he is willing to wait for his pay till I can sell my logs in the spring. It was simply a case of doing as I did or breaking camp and allowing a profitable undertaking to slip away from me. My duty to my family, I think, justified me in taking the risk I did."

"Well," said Slab, grinning, "you took the risk and lost, so I don't see that you have anything to grumble about."

"I am not grumbling, my boy," and the keen eyes of the lumberman sent a sharp glance at the speaker. "What I have told you about happened two nights ago. I might have escaped only for the fact that I could not leave British soil with poor Jake Haist in their hands and likely to go up for twenty years or more. I have waited about, in hiding, of course, hoping to be of service to the poor boy."

"Jake Haist!' ejaculated Emil. "Why, I know a boy of that name. He is two years older than I; but of course it can't be he. Jacob is his mother's own boy, and wouldn't do a mean action for any amount of money."

"My Jake is the only support of a widowed mother," said Mr. Wentler.

"Does he live in Calais?"

"Yes, not far from the river, on Blank street."

"It is Jake, sure enough!" exclaimed Emil. "I don't see what possessed him to go into anything so rash—so wicked in fact," and the boy's face glowed with deep feeling. "He doesn't like the British, though, and maybe he thought he was doing right."

"That's what he thought, of course."

"And Jake is in prison. What will they do with him, do you think?"

"Unless he is helped away the authorities will send him to Van Dieman's Land. I fear it will kill his poor mother," returned the man, a softened look in his eyes.

"I don't see what else he could expect," volunteered Slab. "I know Jake Haist; he's one of these goody boys who think they are the best ever. I say it serves him right. Jake has often called me down for doing some little things that didn't hurt anybody, and wasn't very wrong anyhow. Now see what a scrape the fellow has got into."

"By George," broke in little Seth "we can't go back on one of our own Calais fellows. If you'll tell us what to do, Mr. Wentler, we'll turn in and get Jake out of the King's clutches. What do you say, Emil?"

Seth Pintler turned to his superior with a moist glow of the eye.

"I say amen with all my heart."

"And I say, look before you leap," grunted Slab. "I don't propose to risk my neck bucking the British lion just because a fellow from our side of the river goes and makes a fool and criminal of himself. If you boys go into anything of that sort you can count me out."

"There seems to be discord in our councils," remarked Mr. Wentler. "I shall of course be pleased to have you aid me in rescuing poor Jake, but there is an element of danger about it which I charge you to weigh well before you go into anything of the kind. I know where the prisoner is confined; if they do not take him away from there for awhile I believe he might be rescued."

"Then we'll rescue him," said Emil with compressed lips.

"Yes, that's what we'll do," coincided Seth.

"You won't be able to help him a mite," muttered Slab sullenly. "All you can do will be to get yourselves into trouble. Better think of your own folks as well as of Jake's mother. What we came to New Brunswick for was to catch fur and make some money, not to run our necks into a noose. We don't know if Mr. Wentler's talk is all true or not."

Slab shuffled about the room, scowling discontentedly.

"No, my lads, I will not ask you to risk so much," began Mr. Wentler, but Emil halted him with a gesture, crying:

"You shan't put us wise in this way, sir, and then refuse to let us do what we can for a noble fellow like Jake Haist. We must do all we can for poor Jake."

"Spoken like a true American," returned the lumberman, smiling his approval. "Of course I shall be pleased to have such efficient aid——"

"Not me for any such foolishness," tartly broke in Slab. "It's this way, fellows, if you go into this thing I shall go back home."

"Go home, coward," snapped Emil.

"Coward, coward calf-tail!" jeered little Seth.

"Boys, boys," remonstrated Mr. Wentler, "don't scold. If this lad here doesn't wish to risk his liberty he has a perfect right to stay out of our plans for a rescue. The loss of the goods will make a poor man of me, but I care not for that. I shall not seek even safety for myself till Jake Haist is rescued. It was I who led him into the scrape, and of course I should be an ingrate to desert him now." The speaker seemed deeply moved.

Slab walked to the outer door, his head bent in a listening attitude. He had heard a sound outside that might forbode mischief. Before the lad could touch the latch the door was pushed open and several men entered, led by an Indian of tall and imposing presence.

Isaac Wentler sprang hastily to his feet. His head swam from the effect of his late mishap, he staggered across the floor only to be caught in the arms of the stalwart redman.

"We've got him now," chuckled the son of the forest, turning toward his white companions, members of the border customs guard, who at once surrounded the fugitive, binding his arms with buckskin cords.

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FABIAN'S CURE.

BY M. M. CUNNINGHAM.

Fabian impatiently paced the piazza. It was 8:10, and the breakfast-bell had not sounded. But not because he was hungry did Fabian anathematize the cook.

He was awakened with little appetite, but ever since he had begun to order his life he had had breakfast at 8. It had been the sole recommendation of this boarding-place that they had breakfast at his accustomed hour instead of 7:30, as seemed to be the custom in most of the boarding-houses in Carrsville.

Because Fabian always took the first two weeks in August as his vacation he followed this custom, too, though the break in the even routine of the office annoyed him. But habit was Fabian's fetish. Habit decreed a two weeks' vacation in August, and so he continued to seek a resort where the orderly routine of his life would be the least interrupted.

This year he had rather fancied Glen Farm, but they had breakfast at 7:15. Fabian had inquired irritably why not 7 or 7:30, and had decided in favor of Brook Farm, where meals were served at about the hours to which he was accustomed in town, though it annoyed him to have to eat his dinner in the middle of the day and a cold supper at night.

Ever since he had reached his seventeenth year Fabian had been alone in the world, and he had fallen into a rut of system. His orderly habit of mind made him a valuable man in the office, but his unwillingness to depart from custom drew few friends, and at twenty-six he was still heart-whole.

The delayed breakfast was a far greater annoyance than a more serious disappointment might have been, and he gnawed at his mustache as he strode up and down the piazza. He caught the first jangle as the bell was lifted from the shelf, and turned to enter the house, but just then there was a scream from the road, and he turned to see a girl endeavoring to beat off the farm dog, whose muddy paws had already left their imprint upon her dainty skirts.

Something in her pose caught Fabian's fancy, and he went racing across the grass-plot to her rescue, whistling to the dog as he went. But Carlo was determined to make friends with the girl and paid no attention to the calls until Fabian's hand rested heavily upon his collar and the toe of Fabian's boot emphasized lightly the indiscretion of accosting strange young women on the public highway.

"He's a dear old thing," smiled the girl as Carlo picked out the shortest route to the back yard, his tail tucked ingloriously between his legs. "I suppose it is more my fault than his. I walk down to the postoffice every morning, and he always barks his 'good-morning,' but today he seemed to want to shake hands and he did not realize how dirty his paws were. You won't punish him, please?"

"He's not mine to punish," said Fabian absently. He was thinking not of Carlo, but the girl. No woman had ever made a strong appeal to him before, but he felt dazed in the presence of this radiant girl with the gentle eyes and the smile that made the whole landscape seem brighter. He was on his knees in the road now trying to remove th worst of the muddy paw-prints with his handkerchief. It was a clumsy effort, for he only made the smudges worse, and with a laughing word of thanks the girl stopped him.

"It will be all right when it dries," she said with her wonderful smile. "You are very kind, but it really does not matter. By the time I get back from the village it will be all right. It's just a little wash-skirt, anyway, and a trip to the laundry will remove all traces of the dog's impetuosity."

With a nod and another smile she darted down the road, and presently Fabian pulled himself together and went in to his delayed breakfast. He sat in a trance through his brief meal, and hurried back to the piazza.

After breakfast it was his custom to read the morning paper, but he sat with it in his hand this morning and did not even scan the head-lines. He was watching the road for the glint of a white dress, and when it came in sight, far down the road, he strolled to the gate with an elaborate assumption of carelessness, and was leaning against the fence as the girl came up.

The dried mud had been shaken from her dress, and with a smile she called his attention to the fact. "You see it's all right," she declared.

"But I think you need a guard," he declared with sudden bravery that startled him. "With your permission, I will form your escort to ward off dogs, dragons, and other insects."

He fell into step beside her before she could refuse, and they walked briskly on. Fabian wondered if it was possible that she had been going past the farm every morning while he was at breakfast, and without his knowledge. It seemed now as though he could feel her presence through stone walls. Never having been in love before, he was swinging the length of Cupid's pendulum, and he exerted himself to be entertaining. So well did he succeed that when he reached the gate of Glen Farm, all too soon, Miss Semple agreed to go for a walk in the afternoon.

Fabian went into the house with her that Kerr, whom he had met the year before, might complete the introduction more formally, and even smiled when Kerr introduced him as "the Human Time-table," with a laughing dissertation upon the exactness of his habits.

The rest of Fabian's morning schedule was completely upset, though he returned to Brook Farm, and there was nothing to interrupt the even tenor of his routine save his thoughts. He could only pace the piazza and think that Marcia Semple was to walk with him that afternoon. The hours dragged interminably, but at last he could, with decency, present himself, and together they started for the falls.

"How much time have we?" asked Marcia as they started out. "Mr. Kerr warned me that you, had probably allotted a certain time to our walk and that this must not be exceeded."

"Kerr," said Fabian viciously, "suffers from softening of the brain. We are going to make this walk just as long as we possibly can."

Marcia laughed a rippling laugh that seemed to Fabian the most divine music he had ever heard, but she returned to the subject again when they had reached the falls and were sitting on the mossy bank for a rest.

"Impulse is better than system," she declared. "Now suppose that you had not followed impulse, but had gone into breakfast. I should not have known you and should have lost a delightful walk."

"The argument is most potent," he said gravely. "Behold in me a backslider from system."

"Time will tell," she declared. "We shall see."

But time told strongly in Fabian's favor. To hasten the cure he went to an opposite extreme. Instead of the most regular life, he led the most erratic existence, aided and abetted by Marcia. The day before his return to town she declared his cure complete.

"You have not done a single thing today at the time you usually do it," she declared as they leaned over the bridge that spanned the tiny stream and let their eyes feast upon the moonlit landscape. "You did not even have dinner."

"Yes, the cure is complete," he said. "I think I rather like doing what I want to do instead of following a well-ordered plan. But you have gotten me into worse trouble."

Marcia did not answer. Her eyes followed the ripple of moonlight across the water, and the hand that rested upon the railing gripped the wood more tightly.

"You should ask what the trouble is," he said after a moment. "Then I should tell you that, instead of a schedule, the most important thing in life is you. You have lifted me out of my humdrum existence into the new world of love, dear. Is there hope that some day my love will be returned?"

"I think I had better say 'yes,'" she said with a happy little laugh. "It will insure the permanency of the cure."

"And do you love me a little?" he asked humbly.

A soft little hand stole into his. "Dick, dear," she said softly. "Why else should I have worked so for your cure?"

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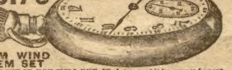

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AN INDIAN TRAP.

BY LIEUTENANT MURRAY.

About thirty-seven years ago, before the Pacific Railroad had spanned the American Desert with its iron tracks, there was a military-station, a small adobe fort, on the North Platte, near the present site of Hawk-Eye, where a hundred infantry soldiers were generally located by the War Department, more for the purpose of keeping up a military show to the Indians than for any service so few men could perform in that isolated situation. The command was often shut up in their stockade—for it was hardly more—weeks at a time, unable to stir out upon the plains, which swarmed with savages. If an unfortunate soldier was caught, he was instantly tomahawked and scalped, his body stripped of everything, and mutilated in the most disgusting manner, after the Indian fashion.

The tribe which lurked about Fort Lincoln, as the men had named the stockade, were mostly Sioux, and though often enough in sight of the little garrison, yet they knew enough to keep well out of rifle-shot, for in the state of feeling then prevailing, not an officer or soldier would have hesitated to shoot a Sioux any more than he would have spared a gray wolfe. The little command had lost, in the course of four months, five or six of their best men, who had ventured too far from the fort after prairie-chickens or a shot at a passing herd of antelope, and resolved to play the redskins some trick which should not only punish them as severely as possible, but which should also frighten the savages.

So one day a party got together, and with the aid of the captain commanding, they constructed two lay-figures, which were clothed in uniform-coats and forging-caps, and so stuffed and arranged as to exactly represent a couple of private soldiers in a sitting position. These dummies were so artistically manufactured as to pass for living persons at a few rods distance, and would have deceived any one who was not particularly on his guard. After these decoys were finished, a party of six men, with picks and shovels, went out of the fort after dark, and dug a large hole, just at the foot of a low bluff, some four or five hundred yards from the fort, star-shaped and radiating some ten feet, the dirt thus thrown up being carefullyq carried back to the fort in wheelbarrows.

In this star-shaped excavation were placed over fifty pounds of gunpowder, covered with old scrap-iron and rusty nails, and packed over all with prairie-grass, so as to give it what engineers call a good head, or, in other words, confining the powder so as to give it the necessary explosive power. All was then covered over with boards and sodded, so that a casual observer would not have noticed that the ground had been at all disturbed.

An electric wire was then arranged so as to reach the six divisions of the star-shaped excavation, and run to the fort, being sufficiently covered for purposes of protection and secretion. There the end was made ready for attachment to a small electric battery.

The Indians never give the frontier troops or settlers any trouble during the night, especially avoiding any exposure to moonlight, however lively they may be after daybreak. So all these arrangements were very handily performed by starlight, while the Sioux were peaceably sleeping in their camps some six or eight miles distant. The two dummy figures were placed in the middle of the star-shaped space which had been mined, with their backs toward the bluff, and so situated as to appear to be engaged together at a game of cards, the universal resort of the rank and file for killing time.

All being thus made ready, the wire end was so arranged with the electrical battery that the operator could see the lay-figures from a little embrasure in the wall of the stockade, and the officer who superintended the affair was already watching his novel and dangerous trap for bagging a few Sioux. There was little sleep among the command that night, every one entering into the spirit of the trick, and determined to be awake to witness its operation. At the last moment a venturesome corporal went out to make sure that everything was in perfect order and sure to operate when required, coming back to the fort through the darkness all safe.

The decoys had been placed just out of rifle-range from the fort, so that the Indians would not suspect that it was a trick to draw them within reach of our bullets, and nothing remained but to await their advent.

Many wakeful eyes watched the day breaking in the east that morning through the openings in the stockade. It was not long before a dozen Sioux, as was almost always their morning custom, put their heads over the brow of the bluff to look about the fort, to see if there were any stragglers outside the walls on whom they might pounce and secure a scalp. They did not for some minutes detect the two men who seemed to be playing cards at the foot of the bluff, with their backs toward them, but it was soon apparent that they had made them out and were preparing to rush down and secure them. Not a soul was visible to the Indians upon the walls of the fort or through its embrasures. They evidently thought that these were stragglers and that they were sure of them!

"They are coming this way, four of them, to cut off the connection with the fort," said the officer.

"And four are off on the other side," said another voice.

"The remaining four are creeping down straight to the decoys," said the officer, in a gleeful spirit.

"They will all manage to concentrate at the right spot at about the same moment," said another.

The Indians, seeing the back of the figures turned toward them, believed that they were themselves unobserved, yet they crept on hands and knees as stealthily as foxes, lest their game should be aroused and by some chance escape them.

"Are you all ready?" asked the captain, who now spoke to the electrician.

"Yes, sir."

"The moment I raise my hand, fire!"

"Yes, sir."

"And corporal, have a dozen men ready to rush out at once to make sure of any chance fugitive."

"They are all mustered at the gate," was the reply.

The Indians fearing nothing from the fort as they were out of range, now suddenly rose a preconcerted signal, and the whole group rushed in upon the dummies at once, intending to slaughter and scalp them. Their promptness would have done them credit under the circumstances, but now, no sooner had the twelve redskins reached the spot then the captain raised his hand.

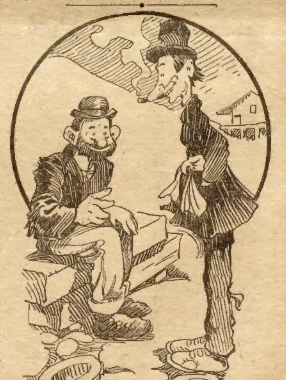
"Fire!" said he.

And the next instant an explosion took place that shook the walls of the stockade in a most lively manner, and amid a cloud of smoke and iron missiles the mangled bodies of the Indians ascended into the air!

The corporal and his men hastened to the spot, where only one Sioux showed the least signs of life upon the ground, and one who had almost miraculously escaped was seen flying over the bluff whence he had so lately come.

A hole was at once dug on the spot, and the mangled bodies were buried, the Indian in whom life was not yet extinct when first discovered living but a few minutes thereafter. The flying redskins must have told some frightful story to his tribe, for the Sioux broke camp that day, and did not visit the North Platte again during the season.

The Indian trap had proved an extraordinary success.



Weary Walker—So you rode on the tender of a engine. How did yer find de tender?

Dusty Dugan—Tough.

Inquisitive Edwin.

"Say, maw!"

"Well, what?"

"How do they get holes in lace?"

"Why, they make the lace round the holes, my son."

"But it ain't lace 'though it's got holes, is it, maw?"

"No, Edwin."

"Well, how do they get the holes in the lace they put round the holes to make the lace, then?"

"Child, you will drive me to distraction."

"Where do they get the holes, maw?"

"Why, the holes are just air."

"O, they're air holes?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, there's air holes in paw's hat. Does that make it make a lace hat?"

"No. No. No."

"A Swiss cheese has holes in it. Does that make it Swiss lace?"

"Hold your fool tongue! Do you hear?"

"Didn't you say all lace had holes, maw?"

"Yes."

"Well, I've got shoelaces, but they ain't got no holes in 'em."

"Leave the room and permit me to finish 'Lady Lingerie's Lost Lover; or, How Lord Lumbago Was Lured Away by a Lissome Little Lallapalaza of a Lacemaker.'"

"Maw, kin you make lace?"

"No, Edwin; that is not one of my accomplishments."

"I don't think you could, maw. Mrs. Knockenberger said you was so fat, lacing wouldn't do you any good."

But maw wasn't too fat to give Edwin a lacing that did him some good.

Stories of Places.

A visitor to the canal zone of Panama can have the privilege of an introduction to not less than eighty-three species of mosquitoes, thirty of them found nowhere else. Fortunately they do not all bite and the contagion of yellow fever is carried by only one of them. Certain genera, technically called megarhinus, psorophora and lutzia, are found, which, instead of spreading any disease hostile to men, wage war on their weaker cousins and at times even on their brothers and sisters. The yellow fever mosquito, the only kind in America spreading this infection, scientifically called stegomyia, is very scarce. It is possible to live for weeks on the line of the canal without seeing a single specimen. This mosquito is a strictly domestic insect, never found away from man. It breeds only in artificial receptacles, such as barrels, water coolers, bottles and tin cans, in and around human habitations.

Memphis, on the Nile, one of the greatest capitals of the ancient world, is buried beneath the ground which is now under cultivation by the villagers of Mitrahineh, who will have to be transferred to other plots and compensated before the contemplated work of excavation can proceed very far. It is estimated that an expenditure of about $15,000 annually for fifteen years will be required to excavate the temple sites, apart from the city. The unearthing of Memphis, which contained the finest school of Egyptian art, will be by far the greatest archaeological work of recent times and must result in a vast addition to the world's knowledge of ancient Egyptian history and civilization. The work will soon be begun by Prof. Petrie, head of the British School of Archaeology in Egypt.

A new method by which the audience of a theater can show its approval or disapproval of a play without disturbing the performance is being introduced by the Italian dramatist Traversi. Before leaving the theater every person is to drop a ticket into one of the three boxes marked "good," "indifferent" and "bad."

Quaker Meditations.

An all-round good man should be many-sided.

Some men never arrive at a conclusion till they die.

The people who go to law don't always find it so easy to get back.

Most of us feel that we could bear each other's burdens better than our own.

The coward rejoices in the theory that discretion is the better part of valor.

It isn't necessarily the man with the red nose who believes in letting his light shine before men.

When a woman marries a man with whiskers she is curious for the rest of her life to know how he would look without them.

Blobbs—A woman over in Jersey gave birth to quadruplets the other day. Slobs—Yes, the stork sometimes makes a goose of himself.

It takes a lot of nerve to succeed," remarked the wise guy. "Yes, but it takes a lot more to explain successfully why you didn't," added the simple mug.—Philadelphia Record.

A Mixed Motion.

"My dear," said Mrs. Blank to her husband the other evening, after she had been silent for half an hour before her writing desk, while her husband had become absorbed in his favorite magazine, "I do wish that you would help me out a little with these minutes. You see I am secretary now of our 20th Century Progress club, and I am trying to write up the minutes of today's meeting, and I am just dreadfully mixed up over the motions and things. Now, at the business meeting before the lecture on 'Protoplasms,' Mrs. Smythe made a motion, and then Mrs. Bright made an amendment to the motion, and then Mrs. Fyler made an amendment to the amendment, and then Mrs. Smythe didn't accept the first amendment, and made a new motion that some one said was out of order, and the chair said she didn't feel sure whether it was or not; and some one said to lay the whole thing on the table, and some one else said you couldn't do that because it had been seconded and had to be acted upon unless Mrs. Smythe would withdraw her motion, and while that was being discussed, some one else moved to amend the new motion, and some one else said it couldn't be done; and now I can't for the life of me think what the motion was, only that it was something about an amendment to some section of the by-laws striking out the words 'by vote of the club' and substituting something that I can't remember; and I was so confused and mixed up that I can't remember what motion or what amendment or amendment to the amendment was carried, or if anything was carried. Men are so used to keeping minutes, that they know all about parliamentary usage, would you mind writing down for me the way I ought to record that motion in my book? That's a dear. I want it put down just right, so that no horrid person in the club can say that I don't know anything about putting down motions and things. I've told you just how it was, and will you tell me how to put it down?"

Such a Little Thing, Too.

Mr. Luggins made a wild dash for an uptown subway express and missed it by the tenth of an inch. Then he walked back to the center of the platform and stopped.

"I've forgotten something," he muttered. "I know I've forgotten something."

Now, Mr. Luggins' arms and pockets were so filled with bundles that it seemed utterly ridiculous for him to say he had forgotten anything.

"Yes," he continued; "I have forgotten something. But what in thunder it is I can't make out. It's not Susan's hair ribbon, for that's in my upper vest pocket; it's not Ann's tooth paste, for that's in my lower vest pocket; and it's not Bobbie's collars, for I'm sure I stuffed them in my hat. Now, what in the dickens can it be? It can't be the stove polish, or the picture wire, or the bird seed, or the sample package of Peeled wheat, or the toothpicks, for they're in this bundle; and it can't be the carpet tacks, or the spool of No. 40 cotton, or the bottle of marking ink, or the colored post cards, for they're all in that bundle. Maybe it's—Yes, by heaven, that's it! I've forgotten to buy the piano!"—Judge.

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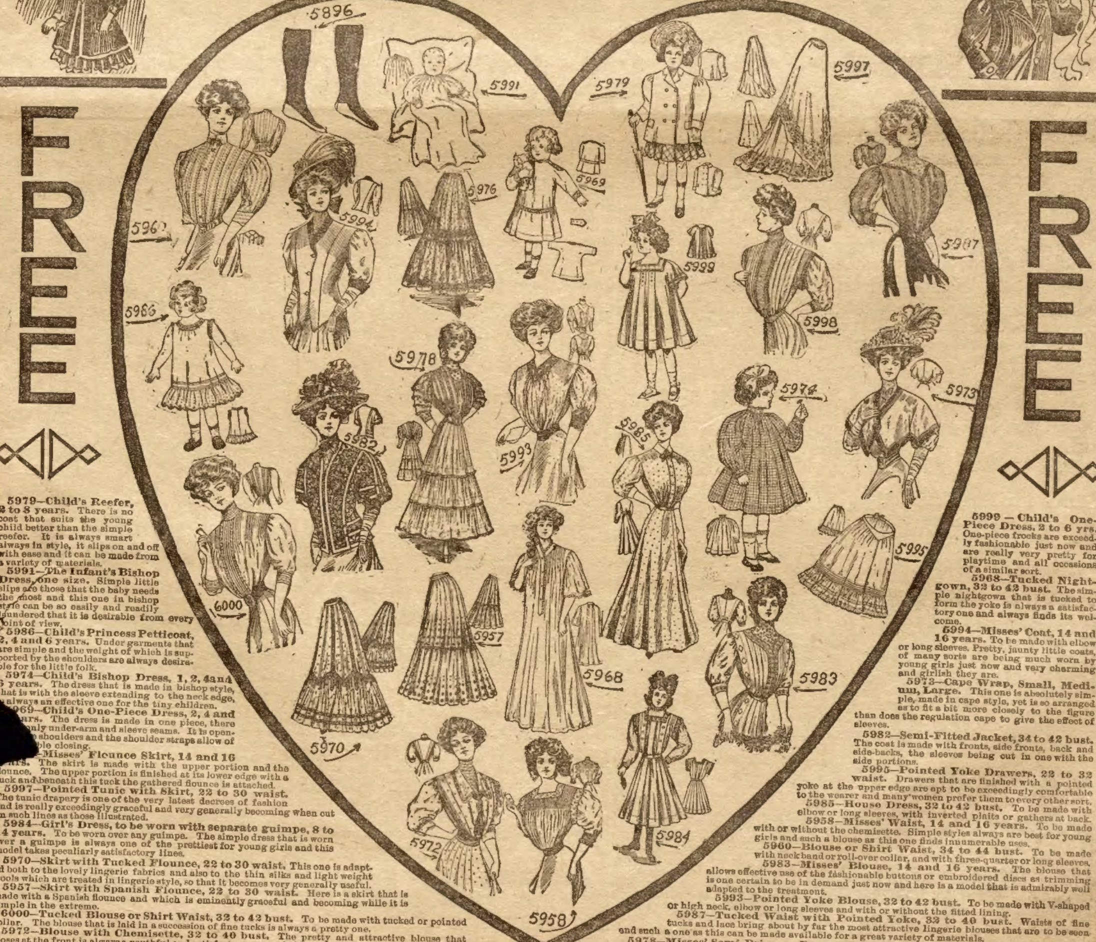

5979—Child's Reefer, 2 to 8 years. There is no coat that suits the young child better than the simple reefer. It is always smart always in style, it slips on and off with ease and it can be made from a variety of materials.

5991—The Infant's Bishop Dress, one size. Simple little slips are those that the baby needs the most and this one in bishop style can be so easily and readily laundered that it is desirable from every point of view.

5986—Child's Princess Petticoat, 2, 4 and 6 years. Under garments that are simple and the weight of which is supported by the shoulders are always desirable for the little folk.

5974—Child's Bishop Dress, 1, 2, 4 and 6 years. The dress that is made in bishop style, that is with the sleeve extending to the neck edge, [illegible] always an effective one for the tiny children.

[illegible]969—Child's One-Piece Dress, 2, 4 and [illegible]ars. The dress is made in one piece, there [illegible]nly under-arm and sleeve seams. It is open[illegible] shoulders and the shoulder straps allow of [illegible]ble closing.

[illegible]—Misses' Flounce Skirt, 14 and 16 [illegible]ars. The skirt is made with the upper portion and the flounce. The upper portion is finished at its lower edge with a tuck and beneath this tuck the gathered flounce is attached.

5997—Pointed Tunic with Skirt, 22 to 30 waist. The tunic drapery is one of the very latest decrees of fashion and is really exceedingly graceful and very generally becoming when cut on such lines as those illustrated.

5984—Girl's Dress, to be worn with separate guimpe, 8 to 14 years. To be worn over any guimpe. The simple dress that is worn over a guimpe is always one of the prettiest for young girls and this model takes peculiarly satisfactory lines.

5970—Skirt with Tucked Flounce, 22 to 30 waist. This one is adapted both to the lovely lingerie fabrics and also to the thin silks and light weight wools which are treated in lingerie style, so that it becomes very generally useful.

5957—Skirt with Spanish Flounce, 22 to 30 waist. Here is a skirt that is made with a Spanish flounce and which is eminently graceful and becoming while it is simple in the extreme.

6000—Tucked Blouse or Shirt Waist, 32 to 42 bust. To be made with tucked or pointed collar. The blouse that is laid in a succession of fine tucks is always a pretty one.

5972—Blouse with Chemisette, 32 to 40 bust. The pretty and attractive blouse that closes at the front is always a youthful and satisfactory one and this model is exceptionally charming.

5998—Tucked Blouse, 32 to 42 bust. To be made with or without kimono sleeves.

5999—Child's One-Piece Dress, 2 to 6 yrs. One-piece frocks are exceedingly fashionable just now and are really very pretty for playtime and all occasions of a similar sort.

5968—Tucked Nightgown, 32 to 42 bust. The simple nightgown that is tucked to form the yoke is always a satisfactory one and always finds its welcome.

5994—Misses' Coat, 14 and 16 years. To be made with elbow or long sleeves. Pretty, jaunty little coats, of many sorts are being much worn by young girls just now and very charming and girlish they are.

5973—Cape Wrap, Small, Medium, Large. This one is absolutely simple, made in cape style, yet is so arranged as to fit a bit more closely to the figure than does the regulation cape to give the effect of sleeves.

5982—Semi-Fitted Jacket, 34 to 42 bust. The coat is made with fronts, side fronts, back and side-backs, the sleeves being cut in one with the side portions.

5995—Pointed Yoke Drawers, 22 to 32 waist. Drawers that are finished with a pointed yoke at the upper edge are apt to be exceedingly comfortable to the wearer and many women prefer them to every other sort.

5985—House Dress, 32 to 42 bust. To be made with elbow or long sleeves, with inverted plaits or gathers at back.

5958—Misses' Waist, 14 and 16 years. To be made with or without the chemisette. Simple styles always are best for young girls and such a blouse as this one finds innumerable uses.

5960—Blouse or Shirt Waist, 34 to 44 bust. To be made with neckband or roll-over collar, and with three-quarter or long sleeves.

5983—Misses' Blouse, 14 and 16 years. The blouse that allows effective use of the fashionable buttons or embroidered discs as trimming is one certain to be in demand just now and here is a model that is admirably well adapted to the treatment.

5993—Pointed Yoke Blouse, 32 to 42 bust. To be made with V-shaped or high neck, elbow or long sleeves and with or without the fitted lining.

5987—Tucked Waist with Pointed Yoke, 32 to 40 bust. Waists of fine tucks and lace bring about by far the most attractive lingerie blouses that are to be seen and such a one as this can be made available for a great variety of materials.

5978—Misses' Semi-Princess Dress, 14 and 16 years. To be made with or without the shoulder frills. This dress is a pronounced favorite of the season and is very pretty and graceful. This model, designed for young girls, is appropriate for a great many materials.

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This book contains sixty of the greatest songs in the world. They are old-time songs and are printed with words and music. The collection includes ballads and songs that have been written during the last fifty years. It also contains national hymns. Space will not permit us to give a list of all the songs. Here are some of them: Good Night, Ladies; My Bonnie, Auld Lang Syne, John Brown, Maryland, Dixie, Yankee Doodle, Old Folks at Home, Old Cabin Home, Kentucky Home, Massa's in De Cold Ground, Bonnie Doon, Annie Laurie, Highland Mary, Robin Adair, Douglas, Warrior Bold, Killarney, America, Britannia, Wacht am Rhein, Last Night, Rocked in the Cradle, Last Rose, Stilly Night, Gloaming, Old Oaken Bucket, Juanita, Then You'll Remember Me. You may be assured that this is the greatest collection of music ever offered for the price. We send these sixty songs, words and music, to everyone who sends 10 cents in stamps. Address STAR LIBRARY, 76 Dearborn Ave., Chicago, Ill.

FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

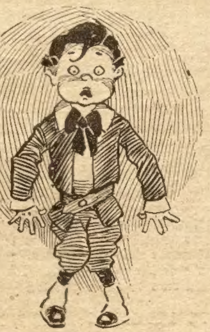
JOHNNY'S DEBUT.

A 7-year-old orator made his debut in front of a large audience the other night at a West Side club. His deluded but loving family who had egged him on to this sacrifice were mostly with him in the dressing room; they wanted to be sure that his bangs did not fall over his eyes and obstruct the view of his mother, father, aunts, uncles, and cousins in reserved seats directly in front.

"Now, Johnny," said his mother, "be sure you make a nice bow."

"You bet I will," said Johnny, with a swagger.

"And let your hands fall easily by your side, like this," and his father struck an attitude.



"Of course," said Johnny.

"Are you sure you know your piece?" asked the sister.

"Yep," said Johnny, and he recited the first two lines:

I wish I had a little dog.
To pat him on the head.

"That's right, he'll do splendidly," remarked the mother. "You'll go on in a minute now, and we must get into our seats. Don't you be scared a bit, Johnny."

"Whoth thchared?" asked Johnny, who began to feel a sinking of the knees, while his heart began to rise until it was in his mouth, and then somebody was pushing him forward, and he saw a lot of faces, not one of which he had ever seen before, and it was lighter than any electric searchlight he had ever seen. "Speak up, now," said the manager. "Make your bow and say your piece."

Johnny made his bow and the audience applauded, but he had difficulty in finding his tongue. His hands hung down as his father had suggested, making him look like a little wooden man, and when he forgot and stuffed them into his pockets the audience applauded again. The manager took that opportunity for a stage whisper:

"Speak up, now," and he began the first line. Then Johnny said in a strange, hoarse voice:

I wish I had a little pat,
To dog him on the head.

(Roars of laughter. Frantic demonstrations on the part of Johnny's family.) He began again:

I wish I had a little pat,
To head him on the dog.

His father rose in his seat; that added to Johnny's confusion. Again the brave boy essayed:

I wish I had a little dog,
To head him on the pat.

Then a weary family took Johnny by the hand and led him home.

Butterflies.

The study of the ways of butterflies will prove a delightful pastime to the boy or girl who knows only how to capture the pretty creatures in a net, to imprison and then to kill them. On some golden afternoon, altogether too beautiful to be wasted indoors, give yourselves up entirely to the butterflies. Follow and watch without startling them, and even in so short a time you will learn enough to make you wonder that any one can presume to call them aimless in their cheerful, busy little lives.

The first butterflies that make their appearance in the spring are the various dusky-wings, brown and black, which blend perfectly with the hues of the moist bare twigs and branches. Then come the tiny blue butterflies, heralds of the first violets; to be followed later by the gay swallow-tails, which are every color of the rainbow; the pure white butterflies of mid-June; the active little tawny and black skippers; the coppers and the brilliant angle-wings, which romp in the sunshine on the hottest days.

Butterflies have a dainty way of alighting for rest. A moth will come to a sudden stop and settle immediately, but a butterfly usually keeps its wings more or less open while it sways to and fro on some flower. If it be feeding, however, it will close its wings tightly, back to back, and if it be asleep, the wings will be packed away into the smallest possible compass. The Hesperini family sleep with the fore wings down between the hind wings, so that only the hind wings may be seen.

Different butterflies manage their antennae differently. Some keep them widespread, others tuck them between the wings, and others again bring them together beside the front edge of the wings. This latter action means that the butterfly is sound asleep and perfectly comfortable.

The first morning thought of a butterfly is to search for honey. It probes every flower it meets, and often works hard for breakfast. The tiger swallowtails have a passion for lilac blossoms; they are capable of gorging themselves to helplessness through their greed for the sweets. If you will notice the roadside pools left by a summer shower you may see flocks of yellow butterflies eagerly drinking, and a pretty sight it is!

The species of butterfly known as the Vanessa are all wonderfully friendly and playful. Dr. Abbott tells of the red admiral alighting on his knee one day as he was writing, and, although it occasionally flew off to the bushes near by, it returned from time to time and was his companion for a great part of the day.

Would you rather win the confidence of so graceful and exquisite an insect and thereby study its pretty ways than wantonly to imprison it? Follow the butterflies into the woods and fields, and you will see how they protect themselves by mimicry, how they make sounds by the motions of their wings, how many of them have all the variety of flight of the birds, and how most of them are clever botanists, making the best sort of teachers for your summer holidays.

A Foolish King.

Once upon a time there lived a king who was very foolish. He thought he was better than any one in his kingdom; he thought he was wiser, and he wanted to be richer. Now there lived in his land a very rich man, who was known far and wide for his fine dinners, and when the news of this man's entertainments was made known to the king, the foolish king sent for him in great wrath.

"How dare you outshine me!" thundered his majesty; "for this you shall die."

"Please, my king, let me live, and I'll do your every wish," cried the rich man.

"On one condition will I grant you your life," said the king, "and that is if you answer me three questions within the next three days. If your answers are absolutely correct and true, I will make you my prime minister; if not, off goes your head. Firstly, tell me to the very day how long shall I live? Secondly, how long will it take me to ride around the world? Thirdly, of what am I thinking?"

The rich man went to his home and consulted his books, and on the third day he again came before the king.

"I am ready to answer your three questions.

"Firstly. You shall live until you breathe your last.

"Secondly. If you rise with the sun and travel with the sun in its course, it will take you just twenty-four hours to travel around the earth.

"Thirdly. You think I'm not such a fool as I look."

The king embraced the man and complimented him on his wisdom.

"I see," he said, "it would be a pity to cut off a head so full of learning. Rise and be my prime minister and share your wealth with me."

Friendship Among Animals.

Friendship exists among animals and even among the lowest kinds. This is often shown when an animal will take the young of another species and mother them if they are left friendless. Dogs will attend to the wounds of their injured friends and we are told that often where a mother bird has been killed that another bird will provide for the orphan fledglings. Nature studies demonstrate this. Seagulls have been seen to assist a wounded comrade over the wave, and a crane, seeing one of its fellows shot, placed himself under the sufferer in such a way as to prevent it falling to the ground; then, weighted as it was, bore the other away beyond gunshot. If animals and birds have this sense of protecting themselves or their wild friends, do you not think they can and do appreciate the kindness shown them in the home?

Another Barnum Joke.

The editor told you a short time ago, two or three of Barnum's jokes, and here is another. On a certain April 1, he determined to "fool" the people of the town where his show was, and increase the receipts at the tent-door at the same time. So he made his printer turn out great, flaring posters, with plenty of red and yellow ink, announcing that on the afternoon of that day he would place on exhibition a special and most extraordinary feature—a veritable freak of nature—a wonderful horse with his head where his tail ought to be. The joke was what the boys would call a "migty thin" one, but the people did not suspect it, in spite of the fact that the day was April 1, and when they poured into the tent in crowds, what they saw was a plain, ordinary horse, backed into his stall, with his head toward the front and his tail toward the trough.

A Pretty Story.

They tell a pretty story of Professor Blackie, of Edinbourgh, who is martinet in the classroom. It seems that he was one day hearing a class with the individuals of which he was not acquainted. Presently a student rose to read a paragraph, his book held in his right hand.

"Sir," cried the professor, in his autocratic way, "hold your book in your left hand!"

The student was about to speak, but the professor stopped him with a peremptory command:

"No words, sir; your left hand, I say!"

Then the student held up his left arm, which ended at the wrist.

"Sir," said he, "I hae nae left hand."

Before the professor could speak, there came a perfect storm of hisses from the class, and when he did speak, the hisses drowned what he said. Then he left his place and went down to the student whose feelings he had unintentionally hurt, threw his arm around him and drew him close.

"My boy," said the professor, speaking softly, yet being heard by every one in the room, "you'll forgive me that I was over-rough. I did not know! I did not know!"

Then he turned to the students, and with a look and a tone that came straight from the heart, he said:

"And let me say to all of you that I am glad to be shown that I am teaching a class of gentlemen!"

She Had an Appetite.

They are talking about a girl 10 years old named Anna Smith, in Kenosha, Wis., who has a strange and voracious appetite. She will devour a dozen candles as fast as they are handed her, and has eaten twenty raw potatoes in as many minutes.

With people looking on she ate two pounds of butter and the same of uncooked bacon, and then finished with a pound loaf of bread. At another time she ate two dozen large pickles, a pound of lard and a pound of honey in the comb. Like a shark, she is always hungry, and if she ever gets a husband he will have to hump himself to get her enough to eat.

The Naughty Boy's Suspicion.

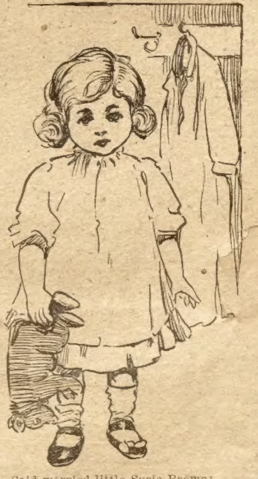
"Where on earth is my umbrella?" demanded a gentleman who was starting downtown. "I'm sure I put it in the hall stand with the others last evening."

"Father," volunteered his son, "I s'pect Mr. Smith took it last night!"

"Oh, you naughty boy!" exclaimed a grown-up sister; "how can you say such a thing?"

"Well, when he was saying good night to you I heard him say, 'I'm going to steal just one!'"

Little Sue's Dilemma.



Said worried little Susie Brown:
"Nurse told me to hang up my gown;
I've put it on the hook, but my!
No matter how I try and try,
It will hang down!"

A Few Conundrums.

Which are the two hottest letters of the alphabet. K. N. (Cayenne.)

Which is that word of five letters of which when you take away two, only one remains? Answer—Stone.

Which is the keynote of good breeding? Answer—B, natural.

Which is the ugliest hood ever worn? Answer—Falsehood.